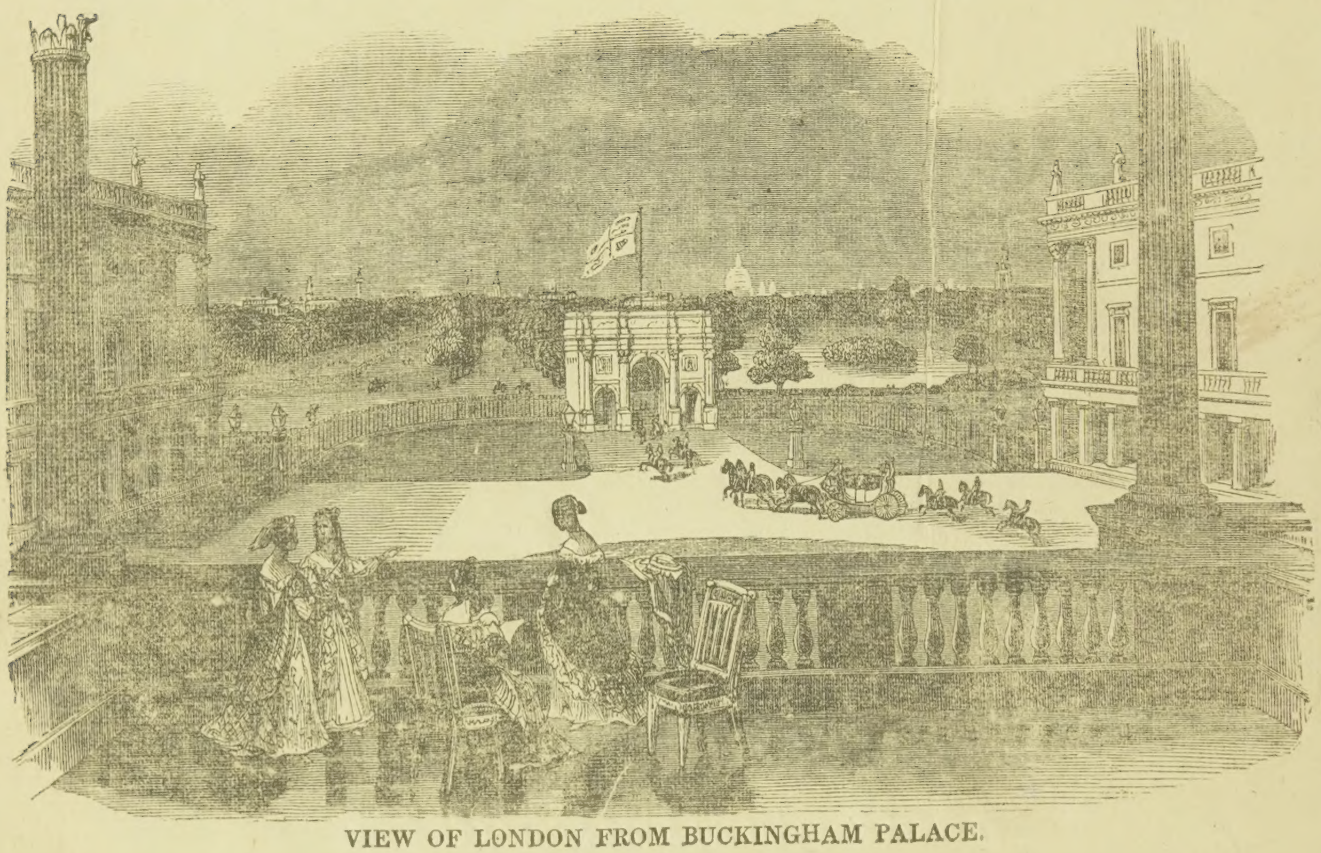

VIEW OF LONDON FROM BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

No. 12

THE NEW WORLD.

PARK BENJAMIN, EDITOR.

J. WINCHESTER, PUBLISHER.

"No pent-up Utica contracts our powers; For the whole boundless continent is ours."

EXTRA SERIES. OFFICE 30 ANN-STREET. NUMBER 51.

VOL. II....No. 27. NEW-YORK, FEBRUARY, 1843. PRICE 12½ CENTS

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF FACTORY LIFE IN NEW ENGLAND.*

BY A FACTORY GIRL.

THE AUTHOR TO THE READER.

In the following pages, I have attempted a portraiture of *Factory Life in New England.* I have aimed, not so much at beauty or sublimity of execution, as at fidelity. A Salvator would have made a dark and gloomy picture, doubtless, with such a subject. A Claude would have pencilled some bright and beautiful *ideal* of his own. There would have been the sunny skies of Italy, the luxuriant vales of Spain, and the romantic beauty of Switzerland all combined; and it would have been a glorious picture. And only a picture; for its original could be found nowhere, excepting in the happy imagination of the artist.

Grateful recollections of kindnesses extended to me by Superintendents, Overseers, and by my sisters of the Mills, are ever with me; and they might have been to me what Claude's genius was to him, but for counteracting tendencies in these same recollections. I would do them justice every way. And, while I exhibit the lovely features in the moral and intellectual character of the better part of the operatives, I would show to erring ones the temptations they are to resist, the vices they are to shun, and the faults in deportment they are to correct, to make them good and happy.

I have dealt in fiction, for reasons that must be very obvious. But I have described no degree of intelligence, none of ignorance; no conditions of happiness, none of suffering; no exercises of kindness, none of neglect, whose parallels I have not witnessed, or heard well attested.

In a review of Mrs. Trollope's "Michael Armstrong," a work written as an *exposè* of the factory system in England, one of the editors of the "Ladies' Companion," says:

"The tale is very affecting, but we do not think it well managed. The rescued factory children are elevated, in the end, to too high a station. It is ill-judged, and it may be said, absurd, to make as good as 'lords and ladies' of them."

Yes, in aristocratic, proud, Old England, where the factory operatives are so degraded, and the barriers in the way of their onward progress so numerous. But those acquainted with Factory Life in New England, will bear me witness, that in making "as good as lords and ladies" of some of the characters in this little book, there has been no sacrifice of truth.

I saw a gentleman from Washington, who fills "high places" under the government, and in polite circles there, and elsewhere. He said, when speaking of the factory girls: "Please inform me on one point—are they intelligent, well-educated, graceful, and amiable, as a class?"

One might as well ask, are members of Congress a polite, dignified, and learned class of men? Are the cadets at West Point talented, honorable, and pleasing, as a class? Are the ladies of Troy Seminary graceful, intelligent, and amiable? For the factory girl of to-day, was the school girl, the village belle, or the country maiden, the daughter of affluence, or the destitute orphan, yesterday. A few weeks, months, years, pass away, and she is—perhaps the factory girl still; toiling patiently on, for the subsistence of worthy and beloved, but unfortunate parents; perhaps she is again the school girl; perhaps she is the faithful and efficient "helpmeet" of the farmer; perhaps the elegant wife of the merchant, mechanic, minister, physician, or lawyer, the accomplished mother of accomplished daughters and honorable sons, who "rise up and call her *blessed.*"

In '40, and '41, there were at school in ———, five beside myself, who had been factory girls. One of them had studied French and Italian, and was then studying Greek and Latin. She is now in the Mill working for funds to complete her education. Another was attending to Greek and Latin. She is prosecuting her studies now with her husband, who is, or is about to be a clergyman. Two others commenced the study of Latin. One of these left school, and became the wife of a physician in the neighborhood. The other is now in the factory, with the object of attending school again. Another studied the Latin, Greek, and French, *un peu, tres peu.* The other was the daughter of one of the first men in the village. Her scholarship was above mediocrity. She is now successfully engaged in teaching.

I do not suppose a knowledge of these languages so common as *might* be inferred from this fact; but were we all to return to the Mills, we should, by no means, be "literary curiosities" there.

I do not say this in the spirit of vain-boasting. I have not written to show to the world what a factory girl can do; or to prove that the operatives are "intelligent, well-educated, graceful, and amiable as a class." But I love them, and would do them good. I have attempted to clothe rules of duty in an attractive garb, that they may thereby have access to those, who would pass them by, if they appeared in a series of didactic essays. I do not know—I never *can* know—how far I have been successful. But if the prayers I have breathed over these pages are answered, their mission will be one of benefit and peace.

* Entered according to Act of Congress, by J. WINCHESTER, in the Clerk's Office of the Southern District of New York, in the year 1843.

KATE KIMBALL.

CHAPTER I.

NEVER was there child happier or prettier than little KATE KIMBALL. Never were there eyes so like "bright particular stars," in the depth and strangeness of their beauty; never were motions so delightfully varied—now elastic and graceful as the fawn's, anon stately and quiet as the giraffe's; and never was there voice so like the jingling of golden bells, as Kate's.

What if she *did* live in a mere bit of a cottage by the wayside—in whose little patch of ground grew nothing but potatoes, beans, sunflowers, and *rocks*? What if the yard was enclosed by a Virginia rail, its gate nothing in the world but three or four pieces of rough, shattered boards, thrown together, and hung by leather hinges? And what, even, if nothing beautiful in *art*, had ever reached her eye or ear? Surely it was enough for the joyous little Kate, that there was such a glorious sky above her; that towering mountains, gushing streams, and beautiful trees, were all around her; and that a bright carpet of grass and wild flowers, or snow and ice (as might be, for little heeded Kate,) was spread out beneath her. She sang, laughed, and skipped, from morning till night; and her only regret were, that she lost so many "good times" while sleeping; and that the folks would allow their minister to talk so long every Sabbath, when it was so much pleasanter to hear the birds, crickets, and grasshoppers sing; and to chase butterflies, or gather wild flowers.

She was never wholly quiet, except at evening twilight. It seemed an innate propensity with her; for from her very childhood she loved to take herself away from all, at that hour, save her own pleasant dreams. *Then* she would not have exchanged her own plat of turf under the great elm, or even her moss-covered, rocky seat, so high up the mountain side, for the most luxuriant sofas and ottomans; for who ever heard such sounds, and saw such sights, in parlor, sitting-room, or boudoir, as Kate heard and saw, in the bright sunset hours of her childhood?

She sat then, with her hair thrown back from her high, broad forehead, her large eyes wandering about from the dark shadows of mountain and wood, to the golden and crimson clouds where the sun was falling, and then to just the spot in the sky where the first star of evening came out.

And, then, there were such sounds! The song of a thousand birds; the hum of a thousand insects; the lowing of herds, and bleating of flocks; the tinkling of mountain rills; the rush of mountain winds; and, it might be, the grumbling of distant thunder—came in one mingled anthem. And, as she listened, her imagination, in its excitement, caught still other music, still farther in the gray distance, and still more strange in its sadness and beauty. Her father had told her of animalcules—of "the multitudes which we do not see, borne on the wings of the viewless air." Perhaps they were "hymning their low melodies." Her mother had told her of Heaven, and of the harps of angels. Perhaps she was "listening to the melting songs of other worlds."

Such, and so happy, was Kate, "when her life was new." There were no modes of joyous existence in which she did not, at one time or another, find herself; and, when at seventeen, she left her home, she with truth averred, that she had known only two very brief seasons of trial.

"The first," said she, in a letter to her cousin, "was when I had been reading in a Sabbath-school book, the story of a very poor family; who *were* so very poor because Mr. Mason was a drunkard. Their house was described; and I saw that it was just like ours. The red eyes, bloated cheeks, trembling hands, and tattered clothes of Mr. Mason, were like my father's; the toils and privations, the tears and prayers of Mrs. Mason, were like my mother's. All at once the thought came to me that we were very, very poor, and that my father was a drunkard.

"I can't make you understand how I felt. It seemed to me that I should die. My heart seemed ready to burst; and I trembled so that I could not stand. I, at last, burst into tears, and cried violently for a few minutes; then, somehow, I was happy again. I remembered hearing mother say, that all her trials—and I now understood what she meant by *trials*—might be traced to my father's loss of a few hundreds, by the failure of the Lawrences. And then I thought that if that was all, why, when I became old enough, I could go to the factory, and earn a few hundreds; and then all would be well again. This was when I was a mere child.

"I do not recollect a moment of decided suffering since then, seventeenth birthday. A feeling of utter desolation came over me at the thought of leaving home; but it lasted only a moment. I know I may never return. I know that to-morrow morning I may look for the last time on father, mother, and brother; but I *think* not. I think there are many days and years of happiness in store for each one of us. It may be a mere superstition; but it sustains me not the less."

Kate inherited the lively and strong impulses, the depth and intensity of feelings, which, under the pressure of misfortune, unregulated as they were by correct moral principles, wrought so much wo to her father. But in her mother's moral nature, and her mother's moral teachings, she found that excellent ballast which made her little bark glide so steadily and gaily on, through storms, falls, and shoals, where purple sails, and golden oars, alone, would have been wholly ineffectual.

Blended as were these characteristics of the parents, in the daughter, they constituted a mind almost perfect. There were all the delicacy and imaginativeness which one so loves to see in female character, with the buoyancy and strength so necessary in woman's conflicts. There were quick perceptions, and ardent love, for all beautiful and sublime things in nature, unalloyed by a disrelish for the pursuits belonging to the *prose* of life.

Mr. Kimball's fondness for several scientific works, and for the poems of Burns, Shakspere, Cowper, and Byron, was almost the only *relic* of his former self. The last superfluous articles of dress and furniture had long since been sacrificed, to meet the necessary expenditures of the family; but these, together with a few old, worn and soiled volumes of novels, had been sacredly preserved. Into their mysteries, Mr. Kimball early initiated his little Kate.

But, well as she loved to revel there, and in fairy worlds of her own creation, she turned from them, with a laugh and song, to the humblest duties of her humblest sphere. So she danced to the music of the spinning wheel; and sang to the measures of the churn, loom, and all. Nothing loth, she mounted her father's faded and jaded old roan to harrow the ground for wheat, or assist her father in "plowing between the rows" of corn; for she had only to give the reins up to her imagination, and her steed became the fiery Pegasus, or that funny creature of John Gilpin's, or the sub-hero of "Sleepy Hollow," or Tam O'Shanter's Maggie; and many times she startled her father from his gloomy reveries, by an outpouring of the glee she could no longer contain.

She knew she would be missed at home. She knew that it was not a light thing to meet the struggles she was about to impose upon herself—and these were moments when her heart sickened; and she almost wished it was for her to lie down to her last sleep, under the turf and flowers of her favorite haunt, rather than go out into a strange world. But it was only for a moment. She turned to the sunny side of the picture; and there were new, pleasing, and profitable friendships, superior facilities for deepening her knowledge of books and of human nature; and, besides, there were beautiful town and county residences, with their piazzas, balconies, shrubberies, arbors, groves, and splendid public buildings, about all of which she had read and imagined so much.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. GOVE was the intimate friend of Mrs. Kimball in girlhood; and after their marriage, their friendship remained unbroken to the time of the removal of the Goves to Newburyport—when Kate was ten years old.

Mr. Gove was a worthy and popular barrister. They had no children; and Kate was their little idol. Gladly would they have adopted her for their own; but the Kimballs would not accede to the proposals, advantageous as they knew them to be.

"She is our greatest blessing—almost our only one," said her father, "and we can't give her away."

"She assists me in so many ways; and she laughs and sings so merrily when I am tired and low-spirited, I don't feel as if I could live without her," said her mother, as tears fell on the head of her daughter, who sat by her side, wondering how her mother could weep, when the sun was shining so brightly, and the dear Mrs. Gove was near her.

But Mrs. Gove did all for Kate that was left for her. She gave her pretty dresses, and pretty books. And when Kate commenced painting on her self-taught plan, with colors pressed from leaves, berries, and flowers, she gave her a box of water-colors, and taught her their use.

Gove, of boarding with a cousin who resided near the Mills, and of looking upon the ocean, she repaired to Newburyport.

At first, her determination of entering the Mills was earnestly opposed by the Goves. They offered her every advantage of education, which books and the best society could give, if she would reside permanently with them. But although Kate shed tears of gratitude for their kindness and love, and in sorrow that she must reject their generous proposals, she was firm in her sense of duty to her parents.

"I long for knowledge, as the traveller on a desert does for the cooling draught. But its acquisition would give me no pleasure, if its price was my duty and the happiness of my father and mother. Let me see them in a comfortable house, with a farm sufficient for their maintainance, and then I can attend to myself."

Her friends loved her the better for her generous sacrifices. They no longer opposed her plan; but there was no abatement of zeal in her interests. They gave her books, and assistance in getting knowledge from their pages. "Wax to receive, and marble to retain," her progress astonished and delighted them. Mr. Gove often assured her that the tables would soon be turned; and she would be their instructer, in the sciences at least. And it was even so, at length. As truth after truth burst upon her, all the enthusiasm of her nature was kindled; and, in its light, she gathered inferences and deductions, which flitted by them with a shadowy indistinctness, or entirely escaped their observation.

Kate scarcely allowed herself necessary seasons of repose; but when unoccupied in the Mill, was almost incessantly engaged with her books, when her dress required no attention. The latter had so few accessions, that little time was needed in its regulation. Its simplicity at work and at meeting, was only equalled by its neatness, correct taste, and economy.

She toiled a year; and then returned home, with a style of beauty and manner matured, and, indeed, perfected; with a mind developed and strengthened by her struggles and her studies; and yet, with all the simplicity and purity of her nature about her. Nor were these all. Mr. Gove owned some thirty or forty acres of land, in an uncultivated state, contiguous to Mr. Kimball's garden. This Kate purchased—at a price far below its real value, it must be conceded to the worthy 'squire.

"I would rather give it to her, if it would please her as well," said he to his wife. "As it is, I can keep its price for a part of her marriage portion."

On examining her deed on her return home, Kate, her father, and her mother, shed tears of pleasure and gratitude, when they saw that Mr. Gove had added, wholly gratuitously, one hundred acres of mountain land, all good pasturage, and much of it suitable for cultivation.

Mr. Kimball was another man from that hour. At first, perhaps, only his pride was gratified. But better feelings came. Gratitude to Mr. Gove, to his noble daughter, and to Heaven, that he was thus blessed, notwithstanding his past ingratitude, indolence, and sensual gratifications, filled his heart almost to bursting. Many times during that happy, happy evening, as they talked of the past, and laid plans for the future, his emotions completely choked his utterance.

The old clock struck nine.

Catharine, my love, you are tired; and we will not keep you up any longer," said her mother, as she rose to leave the room.

"But, before we part, let us pray," said Mr. Kimball. And he fell upon his knees. His wife and daughter knelt at his side. His lowly confessions of his sins, his earnest pleadings for "the bitter past," his thanks for life, health, friends, and, above all, for a Saviour, met answering thrills in the bosoms of Mrs. Kimball and Kate. They wept like children; but they were tears of happiness. And Mrs Kimball thought, that if her trials had been a thousand times as great, they would have been more than counterbalanced by the happiness of that blest moment.

Time has proved that Mr. Kimball's was no transient emotion, growing out of the excitement of the moment. His confessions were as public as they were heartfelt. He gave himself up in baptism. He ate of the bread, and drank of the cup which Christ gave; and with him it was no unmeaning ceremony. He brought all the energies of his renovated and sanctified nature to the work of human improvement and happiness. No poor suffering inebriate was so obscure that he did not search him out. No one was so degraded that he did not take him by the hand and call him brother; and few resisted his pleadings, and went on in their wretched course, when he became bent upon their redemption.

Kate spent a month at home; and most magical was the change she wrought in that little spot. After the purchase of the land, and a few cheap articles of clothing for each of the family, she reserved sufficient to defray her expenses back to Newburyport; and then found her little purse contained twenty-five dollars. With this sum Mr. Kimball purchased materials for a partial repair of the house, and several articles of furniture for their parlor.

Those who expend scores on one single item of luxury, will smile at the idea of refitting and furnishing a house, with the paltry sum of twenty-five dollars. But in poverty's school, the Kimballs had been taught *multum facere parvo*.

Mr. Kimball's untiring industry, his ready ingenuity, his careful and judicious appropriation of Kate's mite, accomplished a happier metamorphosis there, than does a thousand, as sometimes squandered, in the home of the *millionaire*. With the assistance of his kind neighbors, who volunteered their services, he refitted an old cellar near the margin of the lake; and thither removed his house. The clapboards were shattered, many of them hanging by a single nail; the shingles were decayed and mossy. These were replaced by new ones. The parlor was unpainted, poorly plastered, and poorly glazed. Here he painted, papered, and glazed. He purchased a half-dozen pretty chairs for three dollars, a pretty table for one and a half, a pretty mirror for two, and a pretty bookcase he made, painted and varnished with his own hands, from bits of boards left in the construction of his yard. Kate's cousin George brought mountain thorn, for a hedge about the house and flower-garden—this was Kate's plan; elms, larches, maples, and mountain ashes, from the woods; and lilacs, roses, and carnations, from the village yards. He assisted Kate in arranging plats for flowers, and transferred plants from his mother's garden to fill them.

"I really believe that he would not have left me a single flower, if you had not joined your commands to mine," said his mother, laughing.

"Never did one love another as George does you, Catharine," said her aunt. "He mourned for you, when you went to Newburyport, much more than your mother did. It was a long time before he appeared to feel any interest in his work, books, or anything. When he did read, it was the books that you like best. When he worked, it was to make some improvement you had suggested, in the yard or garden. Before he had the least reason to expect a letter from you, he began to call every day at the post-office. And when, at last, one came, I never saw such a happy person. He read it again and again. He did not hear us when we spoke to him; and he seemed not to know that there was anything in the world but his letter, his Catharine, and himself."

Kate smiled affectionately as her aunt concluded. But she betrayed none of the emotions Mrs. Hanscom felt in herself, and expected to witness in her niece.

"He has been very low-spirited, a greater part of the time since you left," pursued Mrs. Hanscom, musingly. "And I don't think his health has been so good as usual, of late. I hope, Catharine, you will not go back, after this year. Your uncle has enough to last us all through this life; and you and George must be married in a year, and live in the house with us. Our house is large, you know; and we will have it fixed convenient and nice for you."

Kate kissed her good aunt's cheek. But she felt none of her apprehensions about George, or of her enthusiasm in view of their marriage. "Mother expressed the same fears about George; but he denies that he is ill, my dear aunt; and I think he looks uncommonly well. His eye is brighter, and his cheek has more color."

Mrs. Hanscom turned pale. "And this is what alarms me most, Catharine. 'Tis the way my family have gone, one after another, until there are none left for me to love, but my husband, my son, and you, my Catharine. Promise me that you will marry George next year, Catharine."

"What! whether George wishes it or not, my dear aunt?"

"He has surely asked you to marry him."

"Yes; or rather we have talked, ever since I have remembered, about being married sometime. Indeed, 'tis so long since we began," added Kate, laughing, "that we planned a swing, a rocking chair, and a sled, so capacious that we need not be compelled to swing, rock, and slide alternately through life."

Mrs. Hanscom laughed heartily, in spite of her gloomy apprehensions.

"But my next year," added Kate, seriously, "must be devoted to my parents, with the exception of three months which I shall spend at school. There will be so many necessary expenses. Father must have stock, and farming implements. Mother must have a dairy-room,

and dairy apparatus. These I must get; for father can't, his income will be so small. Then of the next year, I must spend six months at school—cousin will board me for a little daily assistance in her work. I shall need the remainder of the year, you know, in accumulating my humble 'fixing out.' This done, my dear aunt, and I am at your service the rest of my life, if George wishes it."

Her eyes filled; and she ran from the room, partly to conceal her emotion, and partly to avoid further importunities from her aunt.

She loved her cousin; but she had began to see that it was just as she loved all her favorites, and to fear that this attachment would be an unsafe basis of matrimonial happiness. But yet, he was so good, so pleasant, so fond of her, and so attentive to her comfort—surely she could live happily with George.

So reasoned Kate, as she fled; and meeting her uncle on his way to the parlor she had just left, she took his hand and led him to her aunt.

The result of this interview was everything but satisfactory to Mrs. Hanscom. In vain her husband expatiated, during their ride home, on the growing beauties and virtues of their niece; and on the happiness in store for George and them. She forced a smile, as often as she observed that he was talking to her; and then gave herself up again to her gloomy musings, from which she was aroused, at last, by the appearance of George, who came out to assist her in alighting from the carriage, as it stopped at their own door.

George seemed to read her thoughts, and the cause of the unusual tenderness of her tone, as she enquired about his health, and his manner of spending his solitary day; for his hand trembled in hers; the color was heightened in his cheek, and the lustre in his eye.

He was at the cottage early on the morning of Kate's departure; but, well as Kate loved him, she wished he had not come—for his excessive melancholy oppressed her. And when, after arranging her shawl, he caught her to his heart, and imprinted a passionate kiss upon her lips, his emotion was wholly inexplicable to her.

CHAPTER III.

WITH renewed exertion, Kate entered upon her second year. Her experiment was hazardous. With her, it proved entirely successful; with others, it might result only in ruined health. Her cousin offered her a home and boarding, for the sewing she could accomplish in her evenings. Kate accepted her offer—it was the widow's mite; and then, that she might not lose her hours of study, she rose an hour, or two, or three, before the time for commencing work.

By these means, on leaving the Mill for school, she sent home fifty dollars, besides several articles of clothing and books. She purchased, likewise, books, implements of drawing and painting for herself; and made a slight addition to her simple wardrobe. Even then, it consisted only of a pretty white dress for warm weather, and a fifty cents per yard cambleteen for cold; two every-day dresses, and an old white, made "maist as gude as the new," and a de l'aine for *mediums*—excepting, of course, the necessary *et cetera* of female costume.

But was she not happier, think ye, my sisters of the Mills, than she could have been if she had spent all her earnings for dress? and if the fashions, instead of books, had been her study?

Kate entered school, as she did every other place, with the very comfortable feeling, that friends were all about her, that in every being she saw a brother or a sister. So she laughed just as loud, and as often; talked just as fast, and as confidingly, as erst.

"Now, Kate, do relieve me. I am so tired of this monotony," said one of Kate's schoolmates, a pleasant, pretty body, in a pretty silk dress, and a pretty straw hat; but like most young ladies, pretty and *unpretty*, extravagantly fond of "excitement and ice-creams."

It was a holiday for all—*the fourth* of '41—past ten o'clock, Eliza knew; for she had heard just nothing at all, but the tickings of her watch; and seen *almost* nothing, but the everlasting dial of one of the town-clocks.

"Every body is so dull at our house to-day!"

"Yourself inclusive, I suppose, my dear," said Kate, laughing.

"Oh, of course; for you know I never set the tone for anything, but take all by a sort of infection. 'Twas barbarous in the gentlemen to betake themselves to such outlandish sports, and in such an outlandish place as Plumb Island. I suppose they expect us to die of broken hearts before night; or perhaps their vanity makes them suppose that we shall follow them like children, 'bawling down the streets,' after their mammas."

races with Boreas, to recapture our cravats, handkerchiefs, or anything we might please to commit to the old fellow."

"Ha, Kate, what a lucky idea! Let's have a jaunt to the island, with all the choice 'spirits, black and white'—by which I mean, males and females, Kate. I will give Robert Hutchins a hint; he does just as he pleases with everybody; and, trust me, Katy, we will soon revenge ourselves upon *our* part of Newburyport, for the slight put upon her daughters this fourth of July. Now let us do something that will make a noise; this stillness is oppressive. I tried every expedient before I came from home."

"And as a *dernier* resort, dressed yourself as bewitchingly as possible; and then came to put yourself under the influences of my necromancy," said Kate.

"Yes; but 'tis poorly you meet my *ideal* of weird sister, in this new dress of yours. Kate, you are the prettiest creature I ever saw, that is a fact."

Kate laughed heartily, blushed slightly, and turned from Eliza to the window. A gentleman was passing. He smiled, bowed, and touched his hat; but Kate saw no more than half of it; for with a deeper blush, she walked back to the sofa, where Eliza was sitting.

"But just out of the woods," persisted Eliza, "yet some how you manage to be as genteel, sprightly, and intelligent, as if you had been *inoculated* years ago, with all the graces—diseases, I suppose I should say, to support my figure—of an accomplished lady."

"'Well, Mr. Reynard, have you done?
If you have, I think you'd better run—'"

said Kate, laughing heartily at Eliza's enthusiasm.

"Kate, praise will never spoil you," said Eliza. "Pray who was that gentleman you just blushed at?"

"'Tis a gentleman I met last evening, at Mr. Gove's. His name is Norton. You must have seen his initials—C. N.—in the papers."

"Yes. He is a fine writer. I admire his style much more than any other serious thing in the world, except Mr. Fox's preaching. His occupation?"

"A lawyer in *crysalis*; at least, cousin says he is a lawyer. Mrs. Gove told me he was recently from Cambridge; but I inferred from what she said of him, and from his conversation, that he is a clergyman. Now let us take a walk."

"First tell me, Kate, what made you blush so?"

"'Twas all in anger, doubtless; for he disconcerted me terribly, last evening, by observing me so closely. Of all things I dislike to be stared at; and especially, when I am with such a quiet trio, as Mr. and Mrs. Gove, and Mr. Norton formed last evening. I wished that the *august* Miss Perry were there, that I might hide behind her; or that Esq. Lane would call, and take us all to the cabinet, as he always does of late, since he mounted his new hobby, Mineralogy; or that you, Eliza, were there, to look at pictures with me; or that the lamps would go out; or anything, if so be I might escape Mr. Norton's eyes. I never was so foolish before; and I am sure, I don't know how such a spell came to settle on me last evening. It was really vexatious; for Mr. Norton was so pleasing."

"Did your heart go pit-pat, Kate; and did you want to get behind a curtain, where you might look on his pretty face forever, without being yourself seen? Ah! 'tis 'yes,' I know by that blush and sigh. She is in love, isn't she, Miss Holt?"

Miss Holt was a mill acquaintance of Kate's, who had been endeavoring to read the *finis* of a story, in the last "Lady's Book," all this time.

"If she is her case is hopeless," answered Miss Holt. "That gentleman is an aristocrat of the first water. I know them at a glance."

"You rival my penetration," said Kate. "What may be their *insignia?*

"Lofty looks, steps of conscious and proud superiority—there, look at Col. Barnes! He will do for an illustration of my theory."

"And that gentleman behind him, for its refutation, Harriet. 'Tis Monroe. He has just been promoted to the place of second overseer. Observe his 'lofty looks, and steps of proud superiority.' And there is a factory girl—compare her with Mrs. Barnes. On which do you find your *insignia?*"

"On Jane Lawrence, I confess," replied Harriet. "And 'tis all because she happens to have on a new bonnet and dress; for she does not walk at all like that in her mill dress."

"A new bonnet and dress, forsooth!" said Kate. "What worthy patents of nobility!"

"Yes, Miss Bartlett, the surest passport to 'golden opinions.'" said Miss Holt. "But excuse me, Kate; I promised to be at home before eleven. 'Tis past the hour."

"You and Miss Holt have taken rather a novel, and to me a melancholy position," said Kate, as Miss Holt left the room. "I believe I could controvert it successfully; but I shall not try; for I have an unconquerable antipathy to discussion."

"And so have I. Now put on your bonnet; and we will go off, Don Quixote like, in search of adventure. But which way shall we go?"

"I have it now. Mr. Pontis, the phrenologist, was expected at Mr. Gove's this morning. He is Mr. Gove's nephew. I promised Mrs. Gove that I would call to-day, for an examination of my head; so if we are in humor to be amused by disagreeable truths, we will call on him now. Ha! we will take cousin Edward for our 'squire; and go incognito; or, rather, *en ruse*."

"Eliza laughed and clapped her hands at the idea. "Oh, that is delightful! We will make him suppose that we hardly know anything."

"We will be three 'children of one family,' all 'rural rusticity,'" said Kate.

"Yes, who live some three or four miles back in the woods; and who walked all the way into town—"

"To see the fourth of July, Eliza. We will take Barnaby Rudge for our prototype in preparing Edward—put a feather in his cap, picked up ostensibly in our barnyard."

"And I will run home, and put on that gaudy chintz of mine," said Eliza. 'Twas obsolete three years ago, in material, style of making, and all. But don't laugh so, Kate; you will alarm the town authorities."

"Well, wouldn't it be the quintessence of all funny things, if—ha, ha, ha—if Mr. Pontis were to be seized with a fit of poetry; and set to apostrophizing your dress? For you must know that he puts himself into the poet's corner of every newspaper, in every town he visits. He would imagine your dress, and Eve's fig-leaf apron cotemporaneous; and talk like this—ha, ha, ha!

> ''Tis not thy bright texture, thy gorgeous dyes,
> Thou beautiful robe! that enrapture my eyes.
> 'Tis not that thy wearer is lovelier far,
> Than Houries, or Graces, or Naiads are;
> But thy venerable——'

"Ha, no; venerable will not do. What shall be the epithet, Eliza? Ah, I know—

> 'But thou knowest of days which our fathers knew not;
> Thou talk'st of events which old Adam forgot;
> Thou whisp'rest of Eden, of bowers of bliss,
> Of Venuses fairer and brighter than this.'

"And he would be careful to italicise *this*, as the very apex of his climax. But, about your dress—you must find a chintz reticule, of huge dimensions; and stuff it with dough-nuts and apples, for lunch; and what Jones would call, a gigantic, volcanic, bandanna handkerchief."

"I will sew up the bottom of one of Susan's pantalets. No matter about the material of the stuffing. Mr. Pontis's imagination will make all right. For you, Kate, 'twould be useless to attempt a metamorphosis. Your face and manners would appear through the lion's skin."

"I have imitation enough for anything. I will be all vanity and pretence," said Kate. "If you have any finery, such as curls, ribbons, tassels, and scarfs, bring them in, and I will select. I will wear this dress."

Mrs. Gove repeatedly laid her hand on the latch of her nephew's door; and as often turned back to the parlor to settle her features into a proper serious rest. But when there, the sight of Master Edward, hugging his plumed hat so closely in his arms, and looking up so stupidly through his long hair, now thrown over his eyes; of Eliza's unique attire; and especially of Kate's comical expression, only gave fresh impetus to her mirth.

"Kate, don't look so strangely; I never can command myself," said she. "You sit just as though you grew to your chair ten years ago; and your hands are folded so! How do you get so much expression into your hands? Do let them be a little more naturally in your lap. There, I can bear that better. But—ha, ha, ha! Kate, your hair is so curious—your curls on the very top of your head. Do move them down a little. There, now I will think of everything serious."

nounced him. But Kate's perfectly appropriate smile, courtesy, and her "How d'ye do, sir?" and her nephew's manner—half serious and half comical—as he turned from one to another of the strange group, and then to her, as if to read an explanation of the scene, were too much for that lady's risibles. She burst into a loud, uncontrollable fit of laughter; and was joined by the whole party.

"Was that Mr. Norton in your room?" asked Mrs. Gove, as soon as she could speak.

"Yes; he called to accompany me to Plumb Island. He was engaged with Mr. Barnes when I came out." He went to the door of his room. "Alone, my friend? Please walk out this way. I have some curious subjects here."

Mr. Norton came; but he found a vacated room.

Mrs. Gove followed the fugitives. Eliza and Edward could not be induced to remain; but Kate threw off *redundances;* and accompanied Mrs. Gove back to the room they had left. Her eyes sparkled, and her cheeks glowed, even more intensely than usual; and Mrs. Gove thought she had never seen her so beautiful.

"Now, Miss Kimball, you have given me such a clue for the unravelling of your temperament, I fear I shall not fix my reputation as a 'Sir Oracle,' even by the most positive correctness." Mr. Pontis laid his hand on the locale of mirthfulness. "But there is my bell again. Mr. Norton, I fear we shan't reach Plumb Island in season for the chowder. But please remain here until I am again at liberty, meanwhile aunt and Miss Kimball will take care of you."

"I believe I must transfer you wholly to Kate's care, while I see how Arabel prospers with dinner," said Mrs. Gove.

Kate felt a slight return of her last night's embarrassment, when she found she was to be left alone with Mr. Norton. She rose half involuntarily, for the purpose of accompanying Mrs. Gove from the room. But Mrs. Gove laughingly shook her finger at her, and shut the door between them, as she said, "Well, well, Kate, Mr. Norton may take care of you then."

"And, indeed, Miss Kimball, I shall not allow you to run away from me," said Mr. Norton. He took her hand and led her back to the centre-table.

Kate laughed, blushed, and then began to talk, as rapidly as possible, about the prints of an annual that lay there; then of the authors, and of the peculiarities of each. Mr. Norton repeated fine passages from authors she had never read, and she sang to him; and, when Mrs. Gove rejoined them, with the announcement that dinner was waiting, she interrupted a *tete-a-tete*, which Kate thought the most delightful she had ever enjoyed.

The gentlemen left immediately after dinner; and Mrs. Gove informed Kate that Mr. Norton was the son of an old classmate and intimate friend of her husband's while at college. At the early age of sixteen, he was left an orphan, to the care of his maternal grandmother. She died six months before, without the accomplishment of her darling wish—that of seeing her grandson an installed minister of the gospel.

"He had the offer of a vacancy at Worcester, before he left Cambridge," concluded Mrs. Gove. "He has had other proposals since, better, on some accounts, but he is still deliberating between them."

CHAPTER IV.

"Oh, what a delightful evening!" exclaimed Kate, as she and Mrs. Gove walked arm in arm through Mr. Gove's beautiful yard. "I never knew it so pleasant as it has been this summer. The sunbeams seem made all of glory. Dow, Jr. would say: "The air seems full of exhalations from ambrosia, nectar, *coffee*, and all exhilarating things.'"

Mrs. Gove smiled at her young friend's enthusiasm. She understood, even better than Kate herself did, *why* all was so unusually pleasant; for Kate shrank from the analysis of her feelings. She knew that her happiness was deeper than ever before; but she dared not investigate the cause. She felt as if under the influences of a delicious dream; but she had no desire to throw off its witcheries.

"In three weeks this term will close," said Mrs. Gove. "Now promise me that you will reside with us, when you return from home—that you will come to-morrow, Kate. You will be nearer school; Mr. Gove can assist you in your studies; and we *need* your society so much, my dear Kate."

"Yes; *we* do need your society, Miss Kimball," said Mr. Norton, who had approached them through the shrubbery, unperceived. He took Kate's hand, and drew it through his arm. "You see how much *I* need it; for I neglect my studies, my correspondence, and everything else for it."

He still retained Kate's hand, and pressed it in both his, as he spoke. The deep tenderness of his tone made Kate tremble, but her lively genius came to her relief.

"Yes; but I shan't allow you to hinder me, Mr. Norton. And so, if I come here, I shall doom you to pining solitude, except for a short time at this part of the day, when we will talk, read, sing, play, or walk, or muse, just as you please."

"But, my Kate, you have never allowed intrusions at evening twilight, until now," said Mrs. Gove, peeping archly in Kate's face.

"Mr. Norton and Mrs. Gove cannot intrude," said Kate, blushing.

"And you will be with us constantly, Kate. And, Mr. Norton, you will call on us every day, on *me*, ten times a day, if you will. I think you must indulge my foolish fondness for an exclusive monopoly of my pets, by allowing me to call you my children; and to treat you as if you really were."

"You make me happy, my dear madam," said Mr. Norton, with grateful earnestness. "I know of no one who could so well fill my mother's place in my affections. And Miss Kimball—" he added, hesitatingly, turning to Kate.

"Why she will be your own sister Kate. So please not call me Miss Kimball; I always look up, when you do, to assure myself that you are not a nice, prim old bachelor of the old school, in buckram, queue, and golden buckles. But there comes Mr. Gove."

"Ha! as I hoped," said Mr. Gove, shaking Mr. Norton warmly by the hand, and kissing his wife and Kate. "I called at your lodgings as I came along, Mr. Norton, to invite you to accompany us in a walk. 'Tis a fine evening; I have been confined to my office all day. This cool air, and brisk exercise, will be luxuries to me."

They all joyfully acceeded to his proposal. Mrs. Gove separated herself and husband from their companions, to tell him about her success with Kate; and to lay with him new plans for her improvement and happiness. They walked through the cemetery, mall, and then two or three miles down the road, by the Merrimac.

Mr. Norton told Kate of his early days—of his parents; and Kate wept like a child, when he described their deaths, and his subsequent desolation of feeling. He told her of his school and college career, of his later studies, and of the anxieties arising from the deep and solemn responsibilities of the station he was soon to assume.

"And now, my own sister Kate," he added, sadly, "prove that you do indeed adopt me for your brother, by repaying my egotism in kind, when we walk again. Tell me of your attachments; of your—of your engagement. I remember you alluded to it in the early days of our intercourse."

He paused for a reply, but Kate could not speak.

"Will you not indulge me in this, my sister?" They had reached her cousin's gate. Mr. Norton still held her hand, waiting her answer.

"I can't; ask Mrs. Gove—she may tell you all."

Mrs. Gove felt for Kate all the pride and tenderness of a mother; and Kate repaid her in the confidence, sympathy and fondness of a daughter. She appealed to her for advice in every little emergency. She told her all her pleasures, and all her misgivings, with regard to her engagement to her cousin George.

"I know just how you must feel, my dear Kate," said Mrs. Gove, one time, after a long conversation with Kate upon the subject. "But don't allow yourself to be unhappy about it; for I do not think you will ever marry him."

Kate thought of her aunt's presentiments respecting his health; and offered up a prayer, that her release, dear as it would be, might not be purchased with his life.

"You start, my dear," continued Mrs. Gove; "but I do not believe you were made for each other."

"Why, just think what incongruous matches there are in the world, Mrs. Gove. And, besides, George is quite good enough for me."

"But he has not sufficient strength of character for you, Kate. Of the two, you have the more energy; hence he would look up to you for encouragement and support, instead of feeling and acting as your protector."

"This is just the way I feel about it, Mrs. Gove. I would not like to know that I was my husband's equal in *strength*. I would love to lean on him, with the feeling that if I was weak, he was strong, and could sustain me; if I was ignorant, he could instruct me; and if erring, he could correct and guide me. Oh, I know this must be delightful; but I shall never feel it."

Kate burst into tears; and wept upon Mrs. Gove's bosom; and for the first time in her life, she found her efforts to shake off her melancholy, *wholly ineffectual*.

"I am glad to see you, my brother," said Kate, one afternoon, extending her hand to Mr. Norton, as he entered the room where she was sitting.

"Then I shall not hinder you?" said he, smiling. "The sight of Telemachus, led me to anticipate a scolding from you."

He took a seat by her side.

"No, it has lain just so, since Mr. Gove and his wife went to ride, two hours ago. I have tried hard to translate a paragraph which I know must be very easy; but I could not fix my thoughts long enough to finish it, and I was just wishing you would come in and help me. Else, you might have had a scolding, for I am sadly out of humor this afternoon; and I would like to relieve myself by going into a pet, or a hearty laugh. I was vibrating between these two modes when you came in."

"Perhaps I have a good mental panacea in the shape of a letter. I saw one for you, in Esq. Gove's box; and took it with me, as an apology for calling at a forbidden hour."

Kate knew the superscription at a glance. It was her cousin's. She blushed deeply, and threw the letter on the sofa.

"Shall I go home, sister, before you will read your letter," asked Mr. Norton, laying his hand on his hat.

"Oh, no, no! I am in no haste—I will read it now, if you will have the goodness to construe that sentence for me."

She again looked at the superscription.

"Poor George is ill, I know he is!" exclaimed she, as she tremblingly tore open the seal. "His lines are irregular and broken."

She turned away from Mr. Norton, and read. The letter was brief; and its conclusion wrung every fibre of her heart.

"I have told you of our friends, and of my pursuits since you left home," he wrote. "And here I would gladly close; but my chief object in writing to you, would be unaccomplished. I must tell you the calm, but solemn conviction of my heart, that these friends, these pursuits, will be mine but a little longer. I had been failing ever since you left; but so slowly, and almost imperceptibly, that I persisted in calling myself well, until a week ago, when I was attacked with hemorrhage. I did not suffer much, dear Catharine; I do not now. My poor mother was the first to fear; but she will be the last to hope. She talks about times when I shall be well; and did not wish to have you apprised of my sickness. But I am not deceived. I have every reason to expect a second attack soon, and to fear that that will be the last. I know the benevolence of your heart, my dearest Catharine. I know your kind regard for those who love you; and I fear that this will distress you more than it *now* does me. At first there was a fearful struggle. But it was as brief as it was severe; and it left me resigned and calm as I am now.

"I cannot comprehend myself. I seem already in a new state of existence. Energies that I never felt before, are stirring within me, and increasing day by day, as I decline, physically. They seem to feed upon my vitality. Still they sustain me; and they will sustain me in that hour when I must give up all earthly loves—yourself, my Catharine, the dearest one.

"I was not worthy of you, love; and this we both felt. But that has passed. My God only knows how dear you were to me. He only knows how severely, and how ineffectually I struggled to make my love as cool, calm, and passionless, as your own for me. But this too has passed. I shall soon go where my struggles will all cease. There we shall meet, my sweet friend, if we meet not here again. Catharine, the thought that I may see your face no more on earth, unmans me.

"'Tis morning, dear C. I found myself unable to finish last evening. I must write no more—my physician warns me to avoid all emotion.

"God bless you, my dearest, my only love. Oh, may He keep you now, and forever. Your own GEORGE."

Kate buried her face in her handkerchief, and wept without restraint. Death had never entered her circle. His approach seemed fearful beyond endurance.

True, she loved George only as a brother; but a knowledge of his all absorbing passion for herself, and the conviction on his part, of its being but poorly returned by her, had embittered his past existence, and would embitter his last moments, seemed more than she could bear. She sobbed long and convulsively.

Mr. Norton sat beside her, as pale, and nearly as much agitated as herself. Her grief seemed too excessive to be interrupted by any inquiries, or expressions of sympathy; and he gently encircled her waist, drew her to him, and supported her head on his shoulder.

She at length became somewhat composed; and disengaging herself, she put her letter into his hand.

"Read that, my brother; and excuse me if I leave you. I must go to my own room."

He led her to the door of her room; pressed her hand in silence to his lips, and returned to the parlor to read her letter. He felt—but, then, *how* he felt, can be developed by the *denouement* of our story.

As he foresaw, Kate decided on going home immediately. She allowed herself only the ensuing day to make preparations, and take leave of her friends; and, as business in New Hampshire required Mr. Gove's attention, it was decided that he should accompany her to her home.

Well did Mr. Norton act his part, as son and brother. He spent the day with them, assisted them in their arrangements, and in the entertainment of visitors who called to take leave of Kate. The kindness and delicacy of his attentions to Kate often brought tears to her eyes. He had himself met afflictions, and he knew how to feel for her. He had himself drank of healing waters, and he knew whither to lead her.

"I suppose I am *terrible* wicked," said Eliza, as she left the house with her teacher and several other young friends. "But I could not bring myself to be a bit sorry, if this cousin-lover of Kate's were to die."

"Why, Miss Bartlett; you shock me," said her teacher.

"I suppose so; but I really don't know why. He would be happier; and Kate don't love him, I know she don't. And Mr. Norton loves her with all his heart, evidently. I can see it in every look and action. And it would be such a charming match! Oh, I should dance in downright joy; even if it *was* at a clergyman's wedding. Kate deserves that fortune should do all this for her; she has done so much for herself."

CHAPTER V.

IT was late in the evening of the second day of their journey, when our friends reached Mr. Kimball's. It was only the sixth day after George's letter was written, but he had gone.

"He died this morning," said Mrs. Kimball, when Kate became sufficiently composed to listen to particulars. "His death was so easy and happy, that it seemed more like one's going into a pleasant sleep, than it did like death. His corps is as smiling, innocent, and beautiful as a babe's.

"'All is light and unearthly peace here,' he said, just before he died, laying his hand on his heart," continued Mrs. Kimball. "His father asked him if he had any requests to make. He had but two: that his friends would not mourn for him; and that his father would defray your expenses at school, Catharine, so that you need not be obliged to work in the mill for funds."

Kate was unutterably affected by this new proof of her cousin's love for her.

"Oh, could I have seen him, to tell him how dear he was to me; and how much I thank him for his goodness!" exclaimed Kate, as she stood with his mother over his corpse. "It seems more than I can bear, my dear aunt."

She threw herself into Mrs. Hanscom's arms, and wept long and violently.

She was calm, comparatively, from the time that she saw her cousin consigned to the grave; but weeks passed by, ere she could shake off the sadness that settled like a pall upon her—for the bitterness of self-reproach was hers. Her counscience acquitted her of the intentional infliction of a pang, but her cousin's sufferings had been none the less. And to afflict any being she loved, seemed to Kate the severest trial that could be laid upon her.

She devoted six months to her afflicted friends, to whom she was doubly endeared since the death of their son. Meanwhile she received letters often from the Goves, and from Mr. Norton, complaining of her long absence.

To Mrs. Gove's last, urging her return to school before the commencement of the next term, after consulting her uncle's family and her own, she replied that she would be at Newburyport on the last o fthe next week.

After a day of busy preparation, on the evening preceding the day fixed upon for her departure, Kate went out alone, to look once more upon her flowers, the mountain, the lake, and all. She took a seat in the summer-house, that commanded a view of the whole scene. It was as lovely as paradise; and how changed since she left it, not pered in his hands. His crops were abundant, and sales ready. He had sold large quantities of valuable timber; and with their products, had brought his buildings, and grounds about them, into excellent condition. The mountain, and the lake, were all unchanged. The one

"Lay smiling at the mountain's foot,"

just as placidly as when she first looked into its waters; and the other towered up just as proudly. It was precisely one of those irregular, stony, abrupt heights, which always set one to thinking about the ruins of abbeys, castles, monasteries, and so on. It prominences were just as abrupt, and strongly marked; its overhanging shrubbery, and the ivy that clung to its sides, just as green, and just as graceful in their dependence. It needed little aid from fancy, to find there, battlement, terrace, parapet, and all. The house was no longer an unsightly hovel; but the prettiest *cottage ornee* one would wish to see, with just the marvellously white clapboards, and astonishingly green blinds, about which Charles Dickens discourses so wonderfully. The garden no longer vegetated only in sunflowers, beans, and potatoes; but there were instead, trellised vines, clusters of lilac and rose, plats of petunias, mints, mignonettes, *et cetera*, with borders of carnations.

Kate heard a carriage stop. She supposed it her uncle's, and did not leave her seat. But, in a moment, a footstep, more elastic than her uncle's, was approaching the summer-house. It was only "Dear Kate," and "Mr. Norton," and Kate and Mr. Norton were locked fast in each other's arms. Kate first assurred herself that he did not come after her because Mr. or Mrs. Gove were sick, but all because he could not deny himself the pleasure of the thing; and then she cried and laughed by turns, all in joy. They—but I need not describe; for they did and said all the pretty things, which all lovers do and say—whether in novels or out of novels—on all such interesting occasions.

Mr. Norton left Newburyport soon after Ka te's return, to take pastoral charge of a devoted little flock at P., one of the pleasantest inland towns in the State. His prospect is not of a "golden fleece;" but of great usefulness and enjoyment, with a society of intelligent, warm-hearted people.

The parsonage is a classical little retreat. It is such a one as he and Kate would have planned for themselves—exactly suited to their humble means, and their humble wishes. To fit herself for its keeper, and for the wife of her beloved Norton, Kate is toiling arduously in the cultivation of her intellect and her affections, and in the acquisition of all the *accomplishments* of the perfect housewife.

EMMA HALE.

CHAPTER I.

FROM infancy, until within the last two months, Emma Hal had been loved and cared for by the best and kindest of parents. They were not rich; but their pretty little farm by the Merrimac, afforded them all the necessaries, and many of the elegances of life. As the height of their fondest wishes, its avails enabled them to give to Emma the best education of any girl in town.

Emma did not spend so many terms at the academy as many other young ladies of the village; but her untiring assiduity in the prosecution of her studies while there, and at home, under the supervision of her excellent and accomplished mother, won for her the just reputation of being the most thorough scholar among the ladies of Boscawen. But she bore her successes so meekly, she was so gentle and affectionate, that envy was effectually put to rest in the bosoms of the less fortunate.

So Emma was a universal favorite. If there was a prettiest one among the flowers of Esquire Marshall's garden, Catharine gave it to Emma. If there was a best specimen among minerals collected, Edward bore it to her little cabinet. The best seat at school, and the best rocking chair at every little party, were awarded to her as a matter or course.

Not that she arrogated all these marks of respect to herself. No one could be less exacting. They were the natural and voluntary tributes of love to love—fruits of pure impulses in young and loving hearts toward the young and lovely.

And here let me remark upon the injustice of the adage, "If you would have enemies, excel others; if friends let others excel you." Many who have beauty, talent, and many real excellences, are yet

heart. By their assuming, haughty style of manners, by their selfishness and unkindness of feeling, they incur from the charitable, just disapprobation; and from the censorious, severe scandal. They dignify these by the name of *persecutions*; and, with quite the air of martyrs, say—"If you would have enemies, excel others; if friends, let others excel you!" But the heart instinctively loves whatever is lovely, in character, face, and form. Envy may be occasionally started in little minds, by consciousness of inferiority; yet it will soon, and effectually be put to rest, if its object be intrinsically superior.

Emma carried about with her, constantly, a consciousness of the Source of all good. She felt that she was thus blessed, not because she deserved it more than others; but because kind and loving parents were hers, and because they had faithfully and judiciously discharged their duties to her. Hence, the charm which pervaded every moment, shone in every glance of her mild blue eye, and breathed in every word she uttered.

At last there came a melancholy change over her destiny. Her mother was lying dangerously ill of a fever, when her father was thrown from his carriage, on a dark evening, and instantly killed. Mrs. Hale survived this dreadful shock only two days; and poor Emma was an orphan.

To add to her distress, which already seemed insupportable, soon after her father's death, a letter came from his brother, at the South, stating that in consequence of recent and heavy losses, which he had no means of retrieving there, he found himself under the unpleasant necessity of returning to Boscawen, and renewing his claim on the patrimonial estate.

This estate, the home of Emma, had descended to the joint tenure of the brothers, from their father. As Albert, the father of Emma, was married, and Alfred was not, it was decided that Albert should occupy the estate. Meanwhile it was to be Alfred's home, as heretofore, whenever he chose to repair to it.

Having completed his collegiate course, and the study of his profession, he turned himself to the choice of a wife. After looking about him awhile, and making sundry inquiries as to fortune, health, disposition, accomplishments, *et cetera*, with just the business-like manner of a dealer in *horse flesh*, he came to the very modest conclusion, that there was but one lady in the county meet to become the wife of Alfred Hale, Esq., A. M., &c. So he sat himself down beside Miss Butler, and proposed "in good set terms." She rejected him. "Strange!" thought all Boscawen. "Passing strange!" thought Alfred Hale, Esq.

His defeat became as public as he had made his intentions; his disappointment and chagrin as excessive as his hopes had been. He gave up his share of the estate to his brother, in remuneration of funds he had received from him in the prosecution of his studies; and left Boscawen—forever. At least so he delighted to declare.

CHAPTER II.

YEAR after year passed away, and Esq. Hale did not return. His successive letters to his brother informed him that he was married to an accomplished heiress, only daughter of Judge Fitch, a distinguished planter—that he had abandoned his profession, and invested his little capital with his father-in-law; and, by that means, he was rapidly increasing in wealth—and that a fine healthy boy, and a lovely daughter were added to them.

Then, as time passed on, his letters became less frequent, and more brief. They finally ceased entirely; and for two years there had been no intercourse between the families, until a distant member of his family wrote, apprising him of the death of his brother and sister. Although never very ardent in his attachments, there had been a time when these events would have been an affliction to him. But, for years, his heart had been growing selfish, under the influence of an inordinate love of wealth and distinction.

The letter found him immediately after the unfortunate *denouement* of a chain of speculations, fraught, necessarily, with immense results in loss or gain. All had predicted the latter for Hale; he was so shrewd in all his plans and operation, and so lucky in all his ventures. But they failed; and he and his father-in law were penniless.

In such an emergency, he was at an utter loss what course to pursue. He knew that he held his high station in society, not from moral or intellectual superiority, but from his great wealth; and that his wealth and *caste* must be yielded together, he was painfully convinced. For himself he did not care so much. He could go to the west, and carve a new way to riches and honors there.

His son carried about with him an inate dignity of intellect and feeling, a sweet courtesy of manner, which won all hearts, and made them love and respect him for himself alone. And, withal, he had a kind of contempt for the aristocracy of mere wealth, which contributed materially toward making his family misfortunes fall lightly on him. He had never been proud of riches; and now that they were no longer his, he felt no degradation from their loss. He still respected himself because he was *a man*. There were within him high and energetic purposes, springing up to a new and delightful intenseness and activity, from the ashes of factitious greatness; and he had never felt such happiness as he found in the reflection that he might now be what he so much venerated—*a self-made man*.

Mrs. Hale and Eveline had no such consolations. They had lived wholly to pleasure—that sort of pleasure which fortune yields. They could conceive no modes of happiness foreign to this, and hence the dismay with which they shrank from the touch of poverty. Chiefly, like Esq. Hale, they dreaded meeting the contemptuous neglect of their fashionable associates. And when he informed them of his plan to seize upon the whole estate—one half as his legacy, and the other as a just liquidation of his brother's debt to him for its long occupancy—they felt as if the bitterest part of their lot was passed.

Mr. Hale had strong convictions of his injustice to his niece, even before his high-minded son remonstrated with him upon the subject. He attempted to satisfy Henry, as he had satisfied himself, by urging the illegality of his brother's claim on his part, as there had been no written surrender; his right to the portion that had originally been his brother's, growing out of that brother's long tenancy of his; and, lastly, the charity of giving the orphan a pleasant and permanent home with them, and thus relieving her from all cares and embarrassments.

Henry was unsatisfied, and his father incensed by his opposition. Henry asked, and readily obtained, permission to remain at the South, or go to the West, as he pleased.

Mr. Hale repaired immediately to his wife and daughter to congratulate them on the temporary desertion of their Mentor. Henry threw himself on a sofa in his room, and gave vent to his overcharged feelings in a flood of bitter tears. His separation from his family, under such circumstances, from such a cause, gave a severer pang to his manly spirit than loss of wealth had done. He was deeply interested for his orphan cousin; and his hopes, that by assiduity in some course of industry, he might atone for the wrongs about to be perpetrated by his family, at least as far as those wrongs were merely pecuniary, alone induced him to relinquish his wishes to go immediately to her.

He knew nothing of Emma but what he had gathered from family letters. In one from Emma's mother to his own, he found the following:

"You did not mention your daughter, my dear sister. Do write again, and tell me all about her. Is she affectionate and gentle? Has she the mild blue eye of her grandmother's family, or the dark flashing one of the Hales?

"You will smile, my dear sister, at these specimens of my *yankeeism*. Our Emma is our dearest treasure. The time has come when the charms of our youth charm us no more. Our hearts turn from the pleasures of the world, and seek their dearest enjoyments in our quiet little home. And we find them here. Emma reads to us, and sings to us. She sits by our side in the sober twilight hours; and she kneels with us at prayer. I know not how to express myself; but she is truly the light of our pathway; and there is that in her dear presence, in the loving glance of her deep blue eye, in her ringing, happy laugh and song, and in her tender attentions to us, which, next to the love of Heaven, constitute our joy and our peace. She is in the garden now, gathering flowers. She holds them up to my view, and says, 'they are for you, dear ma.' Oh may God bless her, and keep her, as it were, in the hollow of his hand, now and forever. I do not apologize for saying so much; for how else could a mother of such a daughter write to a mother?"

This letter, together with one written by his uncle, a part of ti relating to Emma, Henry carefully preserved in a department of his cabinet devoted to precious mementos. His uncle's was dated at Saratoga; and was written at a time when business took him to Washington, to which place he was accompanied by his wife and daughter They returned by way of Saratoga, and those parts of Vermont in which friends of Mr. Hale resided. That clause which Henry read, until it was "familiar as household words," ran as follows:

"You say, 'Eveline bids me ask you, if your daughter is pretty,

and if she is a belle.' When I tell you, my brother, that, not only her partial parents, bnt all qualified to judge in the matter, say that she is a perfect copy of our mother, in mind and person, you will believe that she is pretty. She has never been at a boarding school; she has few *rules* for the direction of her deportment; but she seems to have an instinctive sense of propriety—of what she owes to herself and others, which supercedes all necessity of art, and makes her a perfect child of nature. This peculiar feature, this *naturalness* in her character, renders her an object of much attention wherever she goes; and makes her, at Washington and Saratoga, what your daughter would call a belle."

"On these hints" the ardent imagination of young Hale acted. It pictured his cousin as the embodyment of everything beautiful and good. "Gathering flowers," said her mother's letter; and he doubted not that she loved nature in all her moods and manifestations. He never gazed upon a scene—whether upon the mountain-top, when, "from peak to peak, the rattling craigs among, leaped the live thunder," or by "the low murmur of the tinkling rill"—whether gathering the beautiful prairie flower of the West, or the splendid exotic of the South—that he did not wish her at his side, indeed almost imagine her there. When he turned over the pages of the poet and moralist, he never found a beautiful, or a sublime passage, without wishing his cousin by him, that he might breathe its thrilling music in her ear, and read in "her deep blue eye," the raptures that filled his own bosom.

His nature was peculiar—a blending, as it were, of the gentle purity of the Hales, and the passion of his mother's family. The latter was operative only in giving warmth and energy to his purposes an d attachments, except when under the influence of more than ordinary excitement. Then it manifested itself only in excessive joy or grief, never in anger. Hence there was a delicacy and sensitiveness in his temperament, which often led him to shrink from close contact with the hardier sex, and to long for the companionship and sympathy of an intelligent female friend. Could he have found such a one in his mother and sister, he would have been the happiest of mortals. But there was a cold heartlessness about them and their intimates, which shut up all the avenues by which he chose to enter their hearts; and hence this ideal intercourse with his cousin. She came, at length, "all sainted and enshrined, to be the idol" of his "heart of hearts,"

> "In silent ardor, worshipped there;
> And never mentioned but in prayer."

Now, that cousin was to be cheated of her rights by his father. He would have flown to her, but that he might assist her more effectually. On taking his resolution he penned a letter to Emma, of which the following is an extract:

"You will pardon the liberty a stranger takes in addressing you, when you recollect our near relationship, and the peculiar circumstances in which we find ourselves placed by this act of my father's. I think myself under obligations, as far as in my power, to furnish an equivalent for your losses by my family. I can easily do this; for I have youth, health, some talent, and a heart that cares for your interests and happiness; and that mourns your misfortunes more than it does its own. In such a case, you must see that it will be my greatest pleasure to serve you as would a brother.

"Do write, and assure me that you will be perfectly at rest, let what will occur on the arrival of my family at Boscawen.

"May the Father of the fatherless bless you and keep you, my dear cousin; and make you as happy as I feel in my heart that you deserve to be. Your friend and servant,

"HENRY HALE."

On the day that his family left Charleston, Henry repaired to New Orleans; and entered one of the largest mercantile houses there, as chief clerk.

CHAPTER III.

How sweet to Emma were her cousin's assurances of sympathy and friendship! Inexpressibly bitter to her had been the thought that her nearest relatives were her enemies. She had determined not to accept her uncle's formal offers of a home in *his* house. With her cousin it was different. He had not been implicated in her wrongs. In offering assistance, he maintained so much delicacy and tenderness, that she felt it would be pleasant to trust him, to look to him for advice; and, if she must, for pecuniary aid.

She had many zealous and true friends, among her neighbors. Esquire Marshall and his wife, from the commencement of her trials, had been like kind parents to her; and Catharine and Edward were with her almost constantly, until her uncle's letter was received. Emma then determined on leaving her home; and, in compliance with the solicitations of Mr. Marshall's family, she accepted a home in their family. And many others, in that and neighboring towns, extended kind offers of assistance, in repelling the unjust encroachments of her uncle. But she declined them all; and determined on taxing the hospitalities of the Marshalls, only until she could decide upon some eligible plan for her future course.

As far as possible, she meant to be only self-dependent. In this she met sturdy opposition from all, and especially from Edward and Catharine. When they found her inflexible, there was much debate as to the *means*. Teaching was first proposed, as pleasantest and most genteel. But she felt incompetent to teach a high school; and the low wages, and brief seasons of employment for teachers of common schools, offered no inducements there. Others proposed getting a trade. But she had many reasons for supposing that her health would suffer by sedentary occupation. Besides, she was informed by those who had essayed every means of economy, that sewing could not be made a profitable employment. Hence she had only domestic servitude, and a factory life to vibrate between; and, without hesitating, she decided upon the latter.

Edward and Catharine heard this with dismay. They *knew* nothing of the occupations and character of the operatives in the Mills; but their prejudices were against both. Emma had an opportunity of judging correctly, during a visit at ——, Massachusetts. She saw many things which, measured by her high and correct standard of propriety, were worthy of strong condemnation. There were some few—enough, however, to throw a shade over the whole class, in the eyes of a superficial observer—for whose violations of courtesy, waste of time, and other improprieties, no palliating circumstances could be found; but everything in the motives and results, conspired to make them most injurious and censurable.

The factory girl has no time for idle loiterings. She has clothes that need repairing; and books whose instructions she needs. True, she is fatigued when she leaves the mill; but could she not rest more effectually in her own room, while making an old dress "look maist as weel's the new," and engaged in pleasant talk with her chum, or listening while she reads to her, as while standing in the door, yard, or street? She is confined all day, and needs air. But could she not find sufficient for a stationary position at her window? If she needs more and livelier exercise, let her take a brisk walk. If her occupation is so sedentary as to render an occasional *frisk* necessary, let her go to the woods and pastures remote from a village and frolic there. But when in society, let her be guided by the established rules of society. Let her be cheerful, easy, and natural; but not boisterous and hoydenish.

Emma was just in her general inferences drawn from particular manifestations of character. She saw that factory operatives were not a distinct caste—to others what the Paria is to a Bramin; but that they felt as others felt, acted as others acted. Like others, they had their failings and their virtues, their pains and their pleasures. And these were graduated, not by their situation as mill operatives, but by natural temperament, habitual feeling, and such other incidentals as are influential with others. She saw some, who, in correctness of deportment, general intelligence, beauty, and grace of manner, were surpassed only by those who had spent their lives among books, and in the most refined society. These she respected as much as though she had found them luxuriating on costly sofas, surrounded by all the *paraphernalia* of learning and refinement, instead of superintending the operations of looms and spinning frames. And even more, she honored them; for it was something, surely, to relinquish the society of loved ones at home, to subject themselves to the inconvenience of companionship with strangers, for the sake of securing ampler means of mental cultivation for themselves or for a darling brother.

And, in nine cases out of ten, I think, where we find such ladies in the mills, upon inquiry, they will be found to be orphans, or daughters of respectable country farmers and mechanics, who have every means of comfortable subsistance, but who cannot command money for the purchase of books, and such privileges, as their daughters covet. Hence they repair to the mills; and by working there six months, and exercising proper economy in dress meanwhile, they can attend school as long, and even a year, if schools are so situated that they can board at home. They work again, perhaps a year, and then again enter school, accompanied, it may be, by a younger sister or brother, whose improvement is as dear to them as their own.

Some object to this course, on the ground that it calls out energies and a spirit of independence, unfavorable to the softness and delicacy of the female character. I must concede that it does in too many instances.

Not long since, I attended a public celebration at ——, in the arrangements for which a committee had been chosen among the females, jointly with the males. One of the committee made herself most unnecessarily conspicuous throughout the day. She crowded from one seat, and from one table to another. She had loud words for every one who came near her, and a loud laugh for every occurrence. Still she was an intelligent, amiable lady, the wife of a professional gentleman in high standing; and, since her removal to ——, she had moved in the best society there. She attracted the attention of a lady at my side.

"See Mrs. L." said she, touching my arm with her parasol; "how bold and unfeminine her manner is! Trust me, if we might trace her back to her girlhood, we should find that she has been a factory girl."

My friend knew that I too had been a factory girl; and she cherished no contempt for the occupations of factory life, any farther than they were deleterious in tarnishing that modest reserve which she justly considered the jewel of our sex. She was correct in her conjectures respecting Mrs. L.; but how far in imputing her peculiarity to her situation as a factory girl, I am unable to decide. One thing is certain—it did not grow out of it as an unavoidable result. To this, any one acquainted with factory life will bear me witness.

CHAPTER IV.

EMMA returned a grateful answer to her cousin's generous offer. She said nothing to him about her plans; but in one week after, on the day of the arrival of her uncle's family at Boscawen, she entered a mill at Lowell.

Never before had she felt so wretched as on that night after commencing work. "And such is my life to be!" exclaimed she, as she threw herself on a seat and looked about her. "One bitter struggle with poverty and heart-sick loneliness—the sooner it were over the better."

It seemed as if her heart was bursting. She sobbed until her head ached so violently that she could not sit up; and then she threw herself upon her hard bed. How vividly, as she lay there, did the happy days of her childhood pass in review before her! Father—mother—pleasant companions—all the loved haunts of a happy home—had these ever been hers? Yes; and, oh, what a fearful contrast!

She was most unfortunate in having no acquaintances at Lowell. A neighbor accompanied her, and assisted her in getting situations in the mill and boarding house. Had she divulged a part of her sad history to the superintendent, his sympathies would have been enlisted in her favor; but, as it was, he only thought of her as a genteel, modest looking girl, too delicate to be very useful; and as one on whom he would confer a favor by giving employment. To her overseers, her hostess, her new companions in the house and mill, she was not the orphan and accomplished daughter of Albert Hale; but an unassuming, untutored, and consequently, rather an awkward stranger.

The girl who was chosen to teach her to weave, had forgotten her own feelings when a learner, or she did not think it important to do by others as she would have others do by her. She received Emma with a very bad grace, spoke to her only once for several hours, and then it was so roughly that it brought tears to Emma's eyes. How longingly she looked about her for some known face! How her heart yearned for the soothing influences of kind looks and words! But the long, long forenoon passed away, and she met them not.

She had some difficulty in finding her boarding place, and was late there. She entered a dining room where more than twenty girls were already seated. All looked up when she entered, and stared at her in such a manner as to bring the blood to her cheeks and tears to her eyes. They then recommenced eating without giving her further notice, except in an occasional glance. She heard the rattling of kitchen utensils in an adjoining room, and entered.

"Dinner is in that way," said Mrs. Wells, her hostess, as she pointed toward the dining-room.

"But I do not find room there, madam."

"There's room enough for a dozen. Go to the back side of the farther table, and crowd your way down to the foot, and you'll find room."

Emma felt that she could not eat if she went to the table. She would have retired, and vented her overcharged heart in a flood of tears; but she knew not where to find her room. There was something so rough and uncourteous in Mrs. Wells' manner that she dreaded hearing her speak again, and accordingly made her way back to the table.

A universal titter went round the dining-room at Mrs. Wells' ungracious reply to Emma. It had only partially subsided on her return. They all looked up when she re-entered; and with all her unsuspecting confidence in the world, she could not interpret the ironical smiles that sat on every face.

How little did Mrs. Wells calculate on the results of those unfeeling words of hers! Their spirit was contagious; and if they had been dictated by courtesy it would have been equally so. But she had been harassed to death almost by a combination of unlucky circumstances. Her butcher disappointed her, and her milk-man left sour milk. Therefore the girls, instead of sitting down to steak and puddings, as they anticipated, found only pork, bread, &c., and, as Mrs. Wells expected, there was a general buzz of dissatisfaction. This, of course, added to her chagrin; and hence her unkindness to Emma.

This does not excuse her, however. In her situation as a widow, with *such* a family, she met many harassing cares and perplexities, 'tis true; and it needed much fortitude and patience to meet them properly. These she might have commanded, at length, by a rigid course of discipline for her irritable habits of feeling. And how much happier it would have rendered her situation! She would have offered pleasant and polite apologies for any failure on her part, and these would have been pleasantly and politely received. Perhaps not, however, by just such boarders as were hers at the time Emma entered the family. But she would not have had such boarders if she had managed correctly.

I think there is hardly an instance in which the hostess does not give tone to the general feeling of her household. If she is cheerful and benevolent, attentive to the sick and the stranger, she will soon find herself surrounded by the cheerful and the benevolent; by those who love her next to their own mothers, and who will make almost any sacrifice for her comfort. If vacancies occur in such families, they are immediately filled by the intelligent and amiable, who, like Emma, were unfortunate in their first selection, who were longing for a more congenial element. Therefore the stranger, unless she has some influential friend among the operatives, is almost invariably under the necessity of accepting a home in some of the inferior houses. These houses are every way respectable; and one must see the difference between them and the best regulated houses, to understand it.

I have had an opportunity to do this, and to trace the contrast to its fountain-head—the mistresses of the families. Several years since, on my way to Boston, I spent a Sabbath at Lowell. As I had never been in town before, I had no acquaintances there with the exception of two ladies who went from our town—both of them mill girls. One of them, Ann Murray, was the daughter of a respectable farmer who lived just out of our village. He cared more, however, for the acquisition of dollars and cents than for intellectual acquirements; and so his daughter's education was neglected. She grew up a pretty, warm-hearted, and rather graceful girl, but a sad romp. When she left home for Lowell, the last places she visited were the avenue where she had rolled her hoop, jumped her rope, and rode stick-horses; the orchard where she had swung; and the meadow-brook where she angled with her brothers.

I called on her on Saturday evening early; and found her in a sitting-room with fifteen or twenty other young girls some mending, and some making clothes; some knitting, and others idling: she attempting to read a letter she had just received from her lover; but effectually prevented by a gay young creature, who peeped over her shoulder, and read aloud as often as the lady commenced reading. She rose, and Frank—the girls called her—rose also. She laughed and mounted a chair; but all to no purpose. Frank sprang into one behind her, and read—"I want to see you *awfully*," but whether she found it there or not is a matter of doubt. The lady attempted to escape from the room, but Frank, although a slight creature, defeated her purpose by her superior agility; and at last, succeeded in capturing the letter. The owner called Ann to the rescue. She flew to the spot. Others were drawn into the contest, utterly regardless of the presence of a stranger—so accustomed were they to it; and in a few moments the room was a scene of the most utter confusion I ever witnessed except among children. In

the midst of it, Mrs. Flint, the lady of the house, entered. She came in laughing; and her presence only gave a new impetus to their mirth Two ladies sat near me, who were not engaged in the sport. The following conversation passed between them.

"Mother Flint has broken out in a new spot."

"I should think she had. If she had happened to be in one of her cross fits, she would have turned them all out doors."

"Yes, if cross looks and cross words could do it. It takes more than one like her to frighten me. She don't praise and blame, laugh and scold, from principle, because the case happens to require it; but it is just as she happens to be in humor."

"Yes; just see her laugh and clap her hands. If something happens to go wrong in the kitchen, in five minutes we shall see her play on quite another key. See, Ann! she has got the letter, and is about giving it to Susan with a speech. Hear her! She is mimicking Mr. Allen's preaching."

"I never saw such a mimic in my life. I don't mind this, but she takes us off, too; and mother Flint, and all; and I won't indulge her in laughing at her, if I can help it."

But she could not, nor could I, heartily as I disapproved mimicry, when she changed her attitude and tone to those of an odd preacher who held forth one year in our town Her *likeness* was a perfect one She delivered the letter. Some one called her "grandma'am," and in an instant she was seated, and talking with just the tone and manner of a lady of eighty. This, too, caused much mirth; and none were more vehement in its manifestations than Mrs. Flint. All laughed. Witty words fell from every lip.

I sat a few moments; but tired of such confusion, especially as it occurred when the mind longed to settle into an appropriate seriousness for the Sabbath, I interrupted Ann, by begging her to accompany me to the house of my friend Alice.

What a different scene opened before me there! There were as many girls; but the most perfect stillness and decorum were preserved among them. They all rose on my entrance, and Alice introduced me to them collectively. Ann forgot, as she said, to introduce me at Mrs. Flint's.

Alice, and several others, had their Bibles and Sabbath-school books. They had evidently been rehearsing their lesson, while others listened to them. I felt as if in a new world. The dress of the girls —so neat and genteel; their faces so expressive of serious, but cheerful feeling; their style of manner—so gentle and lady-like, were totally unlike those of the girls at Mrs. Flint's; and I was wondering at the contrast, when Alice left the room, and returned with a dignified, sweet-looking lady of fifty. She introduced her to me as Mrs. Abbot.

"Mother we call her," said Alice, "not because it is customary, but because we love the name, and love to apply it to one who is like a mother to us."

Poor Alice's eyes filled as she said this. She had no mother. She was one of the daughters of our physician. His wife was a consumptive for several years. Extraordinary expenses attending her illness, and others growing out of his attempts to educate two sons for his profession, and to fit his daughters for teachers, rendered it necessary that he should be assisted in their discharge by his children To this end, Alice, and two others, who were then visiting their friends, were working in the mill. They had already been very successfully engaged in teaching primary schools; but their present object was to fit themselves for teachers in a high school about being established at the West; and in which a brother, residing there, had some considerable interest.

Mrs. Abbot received me with all the politeness and hospitality which belong to the most refined society. She urged me to spend the night and following Sabbath with them. I gladly consented, and Ann left me.

Mrs. Abbot remained with us; and by her cheerfulness and fine conversational powers, contributed materially to our enjoyment. Unlike that at Mrs. Flint's, the conversation here was general. All sustained very respectable parts; and Alice afterwards informed me that ten of the number had been engaged in teaching. I do not think it often the case, that so many well-educated girls meet in one family. But there are many houses, which, in their system, and high tone of moral feeling, are not inferior to Mrs. Abbot's. And I fear that there are too many like Mrs. Flint's; of whose inmates the general motto is—

"Mirth! admit me of thy crew."

CHAPTER V.

Emma at length made her way to a vacancy at table. But the condition of the food woould have precluded the possibility of eating, even if she had been hungry. Several girls had already left the table. In their disappointment with regard to their dinner, they scattered bits of potatoe, bread, and meat, all about; piled up those potato es they chose to think unfit to eat; left pieces of crust on the table, in their plates, and in their half-emptied cups of tea; and sprinkled everything with gravy. Those who remained at table, were eating with a most rapacious geediness, ever and anon saying some unkind thing which was intended for Mrs. Wells' ear.

"To-day, we have pork, bread, and potatoes; to-morrow, I suppose, we shall have potatoes, bread, and pork," said one.

"Yes; and next day, swine's flesh, staff of life, and pratees, by way of variety," answered another, as she threw on her bonnet to leave the room.

"I should like some water, if the water-man didn't neglect to come," said one, who looked as if capable of better things. She spoke to a girl at her side, but it was evidently intended for Mrs. Wells. She came in, in a few moments, looking miserably fatigued and harassed. She poured out some water, without speaking; and it was received in sullen silence.

"I will thank you for some water, Mrs. Wells," said Emma, extending her glass.

"Hem," said the girl who called for the water; and "Ahem!" echoed several others, as they left the room.

Emma was excessively shocked at their low vulgarity and ill-humor. She pitied Mrs. Wells, unkindly as she had treated her, for she saw that she had much to induce peevishness. Mrs. Wells appeared to understand her feelings; and touching a magnet she became a magnet. Better feelings stirred in her heart; and, as all had now left the dining room, she went out and returned with a plate of bread and some sauce. Trifling as this attention to her comfort was, it gave Emma more pleasure than can be conceived by those who have not been in the same situation.

Mrs. Wells took a seat at the table near her.

"How do you like—" she began; but she was interrupted by one of her boarders, who had just returned from her chamber.

"I should like to know where my linen handkerchief is. I put it in the wash last week, and this is just the way——"

"Just the way what?" angrily retorted Mrs. Wells.

"Just the way my things go. A pair of stockings three weeks ago, a handkerchief last week, and I suppose it will be a dress this week."

"You are at liberty to leave my house at any time, if you are dissatisfied with boarding, food, or anything else," said M s Wells, slamming the door after her as she left the dining-room.

With a sad heart Emma returned to her afternoon's toil. Everything in her situation seemed dark and appalling. Most bitterly did she regret not complying with the solicitations of her friends, and thus saving herself from the severe trials which she foresaw in uncongenial associates, utter destitution of the little elegancies to which she had been accustomed, incessant labor, and consequent fatigue. But it is too late now, thought she, as she took her place beside her unsocial mill companion.

Miss Conner was even more morose than during the forenoon; for her work happened to go worse. Emma changed her position often; but go where she might, she was still in Miss Connor's way. On this subject she gave no very delicate hints; and, at last, she bluntly told Emma that she wished she would sit down, out of her way, until she put her work in better order.

If the mistaken girl had summoned sufficient patience to give Emma a few directions about the simplest parts of her work, she would not only have given to her the employment for which she longed to divert her thoughts from disagreable channels, but she would have won for herself much needed assistance. But she had, long since, determined that she would never have another pupil. She was vexed at the defeat her overseer had put upon her; and inwardly determined that neither he nor Emma should be at all benefitted by her services. She did, however, teach her how to stop and start a loom, and change shuttles, during the afternoon.

Just before "bell-time," after it had become so dusky, that even the initiated could scarcely see, she left her work in Emma's care, for the purpose of washing. Emma was busy at one loom; and, in the mean time, an "overshot"—to use a technical—was weaving on the other. It was no worse than Miss Conner had allowed to pass

many times, with a little combing, shrinking, and flowering. But now she was impatient—her work had troubled her so much; and had so recently been put in such nice order. Besides, she wished her overseer and Emma to understand how much it troubled her to teach her. So she slammed her loom, threw her shuttle into a box with tremendous force, loosened her cloth very much, drew it from the temples, and tore it down an inch or two farther than was necessary, to give it an appearance as ruinous as possible.

To poor Emma's alarmed enquiries as to the mischief she had wrought, she vouchsafed no reply. Emma was already worn out with the excitement of the day, and, retiring to a window, she burst into tears. In the general hurry of preparation to leave the mill, she was unobserved; else many about her, who had left her unnoticed, while they supposed her happy, would have offered their sympathies, now that she was sorrowful.

She went to the table, because she had nowhere else to go to. But she could not eat; and, leaving the table, she asked Mrs. Wells to conduct her to her room.

"Show her the way to the north attic," said she to her little girl.

She obeyed; and Emma was left to herself in a small room containing three beds, one light stand, a dozen trunks and bandboxes, some stationed at the walls for seats, some under the beds, and others on a shelf. Lines were suspended about the room. On these were thrown, in utter confusion, caps, collars, aprons, hose, handkerchiefs, &c. &c. On the stand were implements of needle-work, two or three books and papers, together with fragments of apples, nuts, and lemon peeling. The beds were low and carelessly arranged. In short, everything about the room indicated a total want of neatness and taste. Here was another trial for Emma, and no wonder that her spirits sunk within her.

She at length fell into an uneasy slumber, from which she was startled by the noisy entrance of a half dozen girls. There was no light in the room, and in the darkness of twilight she was unobserved.

"I wonder where that new boarder will be stowed away!" said one of the girls.

"Oh, in this room, I dare say. We have sometimes an unoccupied square inch. I don't like her appearance, she puts on such airs!"

"Yes; did you ever? How she appeared at dinner and supper! just as if the victuals were not fit to eat, or we not fit to eat with!"

"She did not complain *more* than the rest did, I think," said a timid looking girl, who had hitherto been silent.

"Well, what right had she, pray?" Just come here."

"Did you notice how extravagant she dresses. A gold chain—or it may be only washed; a miniature—of her *feller*, doubtless."

"She caught her chain on a chair, and it drew out her miniature. It was of a lady," said the timid girl. She blushed, and looked as if she expected to incur a forfeiture of her head, or something else quite as fearful, by her vindication.

"Well, I don't care if it was. I don't like her, and I don't want to," said a fair, bright eyed girl. Her complexion was delicate, her form genteel, and she would have been beautiful, but that ill-nature had stamped its impress on every feature. "Her hair and dress at the very top of the fashion!" pursued she. "For my part, I like to see girls dress according to their work; and when I see a factory girl so finefied off, I always know that she is no better than she should be. You remember Adelaide Murray, don't you? Well, she had just the haughty look that this girl has; and you know that she was very bad. I wish Mother Wells would dismiss her men boarders, for they draw such girls."

"Why, as to her dress," said Emma's defender, "she was dressed precisely as you are—wasn't she, Martha? She wore a calico dress and collar, and a black silk apron, without frills." She glanced at Martha's apron, with its double frill, as she spoke.

"Well, mine are old and dirty, hers looked as if they had just come out of a drawer; and—I don't know; but somehow they gave her a gay, proud look. And you needn't take her part, Miss Laura, for I shall always hate her."

Emma's feelings can be better imagined than described. She would have given some indications of her presence, but they commenced so abruptly, that she had not time to shake off her stupor, before they had implicated themselves so far that she knew a discovery of her presence could answer no good end. Suddenly some noise in another room attracted their attention, and they left the room. She hastily rose, and undressed, in hopes of losing herself in sleep before their return. But she was not destined to be so fortunate. They soon came back with a light.

"Pretty well!" exclaimed one, "in our bed, Sophia? 'Tis just what we might have expected."

Under such distressing circumstances, Emma knew not how to act. She offered a few words of apology, and burst into tears.

"La, you needn't make such a fuss about it," said the unfeeling Martha; "I suppose Ann made a mistake about the beds. I wish her mother would ever see to such things. You can sleep here to-night, but that is your bed," pointing to the farther corner of the garret.

"And such, I exclaimed, is the pitiless part,
Some act by the delicate mind;
Regardless of wringing and breaking a heart,
Already to sorrow resigned."

says Cowper, in his "Rose;" and such is the pitiless part sometimes acted among mill girls. And elsewhere, too. The same spirit is sometimes manifested among school girls; seldom, however. We sometimes see it in neighborhoods, accompanied by malicious attempts to injure. But there its objects have family and friends to protect them and to sympathize with them, and the darts hurled at them fall harmless, or are less keenly felt if they wound.

Not so with the stranger among mill girls; especially if her lot is cast, as was Emma's, in one of the lower order of houses. The "master spirits" in such families, are those who are feared for their unfeeling habits of scolding, ridiculing, and what is called among them *twitting*. They are ill-natured girls—ill-natured at home, ill-natured in the mill, and ill-natured in the boarding-house. They act, almost constantly, with an utter disregard to good breeding. They scold their "overseers" like very termagants, if their work happens to trouble them; their hostess, if their meals are not just what they expect, and if they are not always in readiness the moment they are wanted; and the girls, if they do not always act in perfect accordance with their wishes. Such girls are miserable themselves, and the workers of incalculable misery to others. They are the pests of factory society; and for their malice, as regards its effects in hardening their own hearts, and wringing others, they deserve unsparing rebuke.

CHAPTER VI.

Emma went to sleep with the determination to bid adieu, on the morrow, to factory life. But she awoke in the morning, refreshed by her slumbers; and after committing herself to God in prayer, she felt a sweet confidence that all would yet be well; and that she should yet be a happy factory girl. She reflected that there were disadvantages attending every plan of life upon which she could fix. She believed that her days of perfect happiness on earth were over, and her eyes filled as she thought that her future life was to be one of lonely struggle with poverty and toil. But she saw her duty, and resolutely determined on performing it, despite the thousand obstacles in her way. She felt as if it were in her power to contribute, by her example and influence—by-and-by, when they might be exerted—to a more healthy state of moral feeling in Mrs. Wells and her boarders.

So strong was this hope, and so pleasing her anticipations of being able to realize it, that they contributed, materially, toward removing the sadness and reserve from her manner, which had been mistaken for haughtiness. Her deportment resumed much of its accustomed ease, dignity, and cheerfulness, which had been so much disturbed by the novelty and awkwardness of her situation; and, when she entered the dining room with a pleasant bow and smile, she met a pleasant return from all but Martha, and a few others. They read rivalry in her sweetness and dignity, and in the gratified looks with which those who were willing to be led, received her little attention; and it aroused all the bitter feelings of their natures. They tossed their heads; nay, one of them went so far as to turn to the girl at her side, and mimic her "good morning." This inhuman act called forth a grating, unfeeling laugh from a few sister spirits. The composure which Emma had attained by such a powerful mental effort, nearly fled before it. Tears came to her eyes. They were observed by all, but she shrank from their mode of manifesting their disapprobation.

One lady beside her whispered, "I wouldn't mind what Martha says. She always hates those that are prettier than she is."

Another said, "Why, Martha! I should be ashamed."

Others hazarded nothing but contemptuous looks. To none of these did Emma give the approving look they seemed to expect when they turned to her. But they respected her the more that it was not conferred. Had it been, she would have assisted in generating and perpetuating feelings, that in twenty-four hours might have directed their hostilities against herself.

In the mill, things went on more smoothly than on the preceding day. Emma met her teacher with a pleasant smile, and expressed her regrets at giving her so much trouble. The most cutting reproof, in coldness, could not have punished and humbled Miss Conner so effectually.

"Oh, it was of no great consequence," said she, blushing; "but I was so tired and discouraged. Yet, you were not to be blamed for that, and I did wrong."

Emma thanked her for the present kindness. "But pray do not reprove me in such a manner again," said she. "If I do fail sometimes, I shall not do it intentionally; and I have trouble enough already."

Miss Conner was moved by Emma's words and manner.

"I thought yesterday that you were a proud, haughty girl," said she. "But after I went to bed last night, I was thinking about you; and it seemed to me that you were only unhappy. How sorry I was then that I treated you so! I longed to see you and ask your forgiveness. It is strange that I can allow myself to fly into such a passion with my work, it is so foolish. Besides, I almost always say something to somebody, that makes me miserable a great while. But if you knew just how I was brought up, you would not wonder so much. My mother is the most passionate woman I ever saw. I suppose I inherit a part of my bad temper from her, but I think the greater part of it comes from unkind treatment. She fed me ill, clothed me ill, and treated me ill every way. She punished me most unmercifully for faults ever so trifling; and, in treating me like a dog, she sunk me lower than a dog in passion. We had enough of everything, my father was a pleasant man, and we might have been a happy family, but for what may be well called *the* curse of our country, rum. Mother loved it better than she did any thing else in the world, and all that father could do, could not keep it from her. I don't often mention this, it makes me so unhappy. But you have treated me well, and I wish you to know the cause of my unkindness to you."

Emma begged her to think no more about it, and from that hour, their connexion was uninterruptedly pleasant to them both.

Miss Conner's education was very defective. This she felt acutely. She acknowledged to Emma the trouble it gave her, and urged her to correct her as often as she spoke improperly, and to give her all the information she could while they were together; likewise, to check her if she fell into a passion. Emma promised a cheerful compliance.

In his "Curiosities of Literature," D'Israeli says,—"We are scarcely aware how we may govern our thoughts by means of our sensations. De Luc was subject to violent bursts of passion; but he calmed the interior tumult by filling his mouth with sweets and comfits. Mendelsohn, (the son of a poor rabbin in Germany, at length the greatest philologist in Germany, and, the critics of Germany declared, their first luminous model of precision and elegance,) whose feeble and too sensitive frame was often reduced to the last stage of suffering by intellectual exertion, when engaged in a point of difficulty, would in an instant, contrive a perfect cessation from thinking, by mechanically going to a window and counting the tiles upon the roof of a neighbor's house. Facts like these show how much *art* is concerned in the management of the mind."

Now, when a mill girl finds her good-nature vanishing before a "break-out," a "pick-out," a "bad selvedge," or any such ills to which factory girls are heirs, she cannot, like Mendelsohn, leave her work, and "count the tiles on a neighbor's house," she will not, surely, fill her mouth "with sweets and comfits;" but there are many ways in which she may employ *art* in the management of her mind She may do as an old acquaintance of mine was accustomed to do, when under similar temptations. She invariably commenced singing, and compelled herself to persevere so long as the provocation lasted, however averse she might be to it. "Oh dear!" said she one day to her light-hearted sister, who was helping her out of a misfortune, "I know I shall lose my temper, my work has been so bad so long."

"Keep singing, sister, keep singing!" said her sister, laughing.

She laughed, recommenced singing louder than ever, and, by this simple means, avoided what she so justly dreaded, losing her temper. And there is a better, a safer refuge—

"A calm, a sure retreat—
'Tis found beneath the mercy seat."

and happy is it for those who fly to it in all seasons of trial and temptation.

On passing through the kitchen at night, on her way to her own room, Emma found Mrs. Wells just commencing the picking of several quarts of green currants.

"Yes, indeed, you may," said Mrs. Wells, in reply to Emma's offer of assistance, "for I have just been thinking that I could not sit in my chair long enough to finish them. I am so completely tired out. I have thought a great many times, when my boarders were sitting or standing around in idleness, that they might help me a little, and that they would if they knew how it would relieve me. But some folks are all selfishness, and a great number of my boarders are of this class."

"Perhaps they are very much fatigued, or do not think to offer. I am not very tired to-night, and can help you without any sacrifice."

Others, as they left the dining room, stopped to their assistance; and, in a few minutes, a task was completed that would have occupied Mrs. Wells—exhausted and spiritless as she was when Emma joined her—for hours, put her under the necessity of retiring late to rest, and consequently nearly unfitted her for the next day's toils. She had, moreover, a pleasant chat with some eight or ten of her boarders, and this was a rare occurrence.

A most unnatural feeling of hostility existed between them. It did not often extend to unkind words; but there were no gratuitous attentions conferred among them. If Mrs. Wells seated them at well-filled tables, it was well enough; yet, if she failed in one iota, she met, as we have seen, ill-natured abuse. If she was sick or weary, it was not their part to attend to her comfort, and they, in their turns, met equal neglect from her. They only *paid* her for "bed and board;" and when these were supplied, her conscience was at rest.

This is a most unhappy condition: unhappy, alike, for hostess and boarders; and I am by no means inclined to believe it a common one, either from observation or report.

But on this evening, Mrs. Wells told them of her toils and cares; and how she was wearied by them; and they pitied her. One of the girls told her how she had no mother; and, another how hers was very poor, and sick. Tears that filled the eyes of another, told that hers was as sad a tale; but one that might not be revealed. Mrs. Wells saw them. She realized then, that she was surrounded by those whose trials were, at least, equal to her own. She felt a new and pleasing interest for their happiness springing up in her heart. She determined to be to them a mother, *pro tempore;* and to soothe them, and atone to them, as far as possible, for friends and joys that were not.

CHAPTER VII.

THREE months passed away; and Emma was a happy mill girl. There was none of the light-hearted joyousness of her early days; but, in its stead, "a sober certainty of waking bliss," in the proper discharge of all her duties, and in the love and confidence of all who knew her.

"See!" said a friend to me, as we stood at the window watching the girls as they passed from their work. "See; there are two of the aristocracy, doubtless." She pointed, as she spoke, to two noble and graceful girls, whose whole appearance indicated a superiority to the mass. And so it was with Emma; and she, to use the by no means inappropriate language of my friend, was "one of the aristocracy."

Of course, this kind of distinction comes not to factory girls by wealth or honorable connexions. It is won, I may venture to say, invariably, by intellectual and moral excellence. They are governed, at all times, by high religious principle. They never deceive; and, hence, it is sought and followed as a rule. Their hearts are full of sympathy and charity, for those who mourn, and those who err; and the sorrowing and repentant look to them for consolation and encouragement. None are so poor, none so degraded that they do not take them to their hearts and call them sisters. To their overseers they are always respectful; and in this they differ from too many mill operatives.

A wrong idea prevails generally with regard to the relation between overseers and their girls. It is not one of tyranny on one hand, and timid servility on the other. With but few exceptions, the overseers are kind and pleasant. They are indulgent as far as they can be consistently with the duty they owe their employers; and they often suffer as much from their inability to comply with the wishes of their girls for temporary release, as the girls themselves do from loss of pleasant recreation or needful rest.

I have had the confidence of several overseers; and I know that if the peevish class of girls to whom I have before alluded, realized half the unhappiness their sullenness occasions them, they would not indulge themselves in its manifestations. If they could not be spared whenever they pleased, they would not answer—"You

always let A, B, and C, go just when they want to;" or, "I shall leave in a fortnight. I'll go home, and then I can go when and where I please." If their overseers failed in their first attempts to repair their machinery, they would not put on sour looks, *slam* every moveable thing that came in their way, scold them, or sit down and fold their hands in sullen silence.

How can a lady degrade herself by such exhibitions? Does she think that Mr. A. loses the feelings of a man; and that she is under no obligations to treat him as such, because he happens to be her overseer? Does she forget that no situation in life can free us from the obligations of the great moral law: "Whatsoever ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

Sisters, be just to yourselves, and to your sex. Never lay aside real politeness of feeling and deportment, which springs from an observance of the law just quoted. You need no boarding-school disciplines, no manual of politeness to teach you this. If it is not already easy and habitual, render it so by pausing before every word or action of doubtful morality, and asking if you would wish others to say or do the same to you, under similar circumstances. Do this for the sake of honor and virtue among factory girls. Do it for the sake of your own duty and happiness.

"Courtesy," says Miss Sedgwick, "is like sunshine. We can scarcely have too much of either." And would that it were more general in all communities. Especially is it needed among mill girls; for there, no ties of kindred, no considerations of self interest induce mutual kindness and mutual forbearance. By courtesy, I do not mean a studied artificial style of politeness, which exhibits itself only on extraordinary occasions, in bows, courtesies, apologies and compliments, paid in "good set terms." It is delicate and respectful attention to the comfort and interests of his girls, in the overseer; it is a careful regard for his feelings, and for the happiness and success in the labors of each other, in the girls. If A meets a misfortune, it brings B, C, and D, to her assistance. If she is afflicted, it leads them to lessen her sorrows by sharing them with her. If she is wronged, it prompts them to defend her. And if she is prosperous and happy, it makes a part of their happiness consist in rejoicing with her. In the boarding-house it binds them together like a band of sisters in love. It is this that leads the well to attend to the sick; the strong to the weak; and the "pure in heart" to the wanderer from virtue and peace. It breathes grace into every action.

When Emma went to Mrs. Wells, it was, "Pass the bread," or "I want the bread," or, at best, "Won't you pass the bread?" Habitual courtesy led her to use different forms of expression. These were, in a short time, adopted by others; and their use of unladylike commands, was superceded by the forms of good society. They found it just as easy, and far pleasanter to say, "I will thank you for the bread," or, "Please pass the bread." And if any voluntary attentions were conferred on them at table, or elsewhese, they did not, as formerly, receive them in silence, but with a pleasant, "I thank you."

These are not *merely* forms, affecting only the "outer man," or woman. They come up from grateful hearts; and they seldom fail to reach the hearts of those to whom these civilities are extended. They are "smiles upon the face of manners," and sunshine upon the heart—warming up its generous affections, purifying it from noxious passions, and contributing to a rich harvest of peace and love.

Such was their result on Mrs. Wells and her family; and such will be their result everywhere, so long as "like causes produce like effects."

Mrs. Wells and many of her boarders had been "keepers at home" on the Sabbath. Those who attended occasionally were early deterred from attendance by fatigue, slight cold, or head-ache, or by unfavorable weather. At the time this chapter opens, Mrs. Wells, and, by far a greater part of her family, were as constant in their attendance as their ministers, and members of different Sabbath schools.

Mrs. Wells was enabled to attend thus constantly through the agency of Emma. She proposed to the girls assisting Mrs. Wells by turns on Sabbath mornings, that she might be ready for the morning services; and that their dinner should consist of cold bread, pies, &c., instead of meats and puddings, that she might attend the afternoon meeting.

To the former of these proposals, all readily acceded. But a few had strong objections to the latter; they paid for their board, and wanted it; they were as hungry on the Sabbath as on any other day, and did not wish to keep fast, or feed upon the wind. These objections were overruled, however; and cordial assents were at length yielded by all but Martha and one other. They left; and their places were filled by other and better girls.

The condition of the family was improved beyond conception, by these arrangements. Before Mrs. Wells removed to Lowell, she had for many years been a respectable member of a church in her native town. But she neglected to connect herself with the church at Lowell; and, as her cares increased, and the "love within her grew cold," she became a thoroughly worldly woman, regardless of her responsibilities as the head of such a family, and of everything unconnected with worldly gain. Under the blessed influences of the sanctuary, old feelings revived. And while she mourned her past delinquencies, she resolved to walk hereafter in newness of life, "worthy of the vocation by which she was called."

"How Mrs. Wells has altered!" said Jane Hoit, to a party of boarders who had met in her room. "She is as pleasant as a lamb."

"Yes; and how dignified her manner is! I used to think she had nothing agreeable about her."

"Oh she appears like another woman. You know she seldom used to smile; now she always looks pleasant and happy, and she is so motherly!"

"Yes; how good she is to us all, now! and how happy she makes us! Even Polly Clay is improving under her influence, and that of the dear Emma. I love that girl with all my heart; and I do think that if there is a Christian in the world, she is one. She works in a very quiet way; but I do believe she is doing more good than almost anybody in Lowell. And how we all treated her when she first came here! I always blush when I think of it. I talked with her, and told her how unhappy it made me. She kissed my cheek, and talked so sweetly to me, that I felt a thousand times more grieved than before, and cried like a child."

"What did she say?"

"A great deal that I cannot repeat, although the substance of it is in my heart. Among the rest she said we should not have done so, if we had been taught its sinfulness as she was by her mother."

"Yes; that is the way she always manages to make it appear that she is no better than Polly Clay, even, only as she has had better advantages. I like her for this; but I do believe that she was naturally good. She ought to be a minister's wife, and have money to do good with, instead of being a poor factory girl."

"I don't know—she manages to do us all good here; the girls in the mill say that she is always helping them, or cheering them, when they are sick or homesick. And then her Sabbath school class: she is doing wonders with it—so Deacon Graves told Mrs. Wells. I don't see how she could do more good anywhere than she does here."

CHAPTER VIII.

EMMA kept up a correspondence with several friends at Boscawen; and, by this means learned all that was passing there. A letter received from Catherine Marshall ran as follows:

"My dearest Emma: I am very sad to-night; and since you are not here to cheer me with your pleasant smiles, and pleasant words, I will e'en relieve myself by writing to you. Oh, dear! wouldn't I give worlds, if they were mine, if I could take brother's arm now, and walk or run, if I pleased, to your pleasant little home, and find you there, as in 'the days o' lang syne;' if I could walk, talk, and sing with you? And wouldn't brother give worlds? He is sadly lachrymose. He has gone out to walk alone, and there he is, bending his steps to our favorite haunt, 'Emma's grove,' I call it now.' He has just entered the third year of his professional studies. Would that it were the third of its practice; and I know of a dear, sweet girl in the city of Lowell, who would be compelled to relinquish a certain quixotic—pardon this epithet—enterprise of hers, and come down to the sober realities of life, making or superintending the making of puddings, pies, *et cetera*.

"Now you need not shake your head and look grave about it; you need not repeat, 'You are deceiving yourself, dear Catharine; but I shall not allow you to deceive me.' I am as happy as a bird at the thought that I shall one day see your beauty and goodness triumph over the vanity of your cousin. Mother tells me that I must not indulge such feelings, and you tell me that I must not. So I suppose it must be naughty, and so I will forget that Eveline Hale is in the world. Oh, dear! I can't. There she is gathering a rose from your favorite tree. I shan't try to be reconciled to it; so when you write again, please say not one word about charity, forgiveness, and all such impracticable duties. Edward despises them

all as much as I do; and in fact so do father and mother. They have made many advances by way of getting acquainted with us, but we meet them all with coldness. The Smiths and Herberts call there. They say they have wrongs enough of their own to attend to without resenting yours. Perhaps they have; but if I had ten thousand others, this would be my greatest one, and I would not make one effort to forgive it.

"I accidentally met your uncle, aunt and cousin at Mr. Hobert's. They urged me strongly to call on them—to call often—to make their house a sort of second home. Miss Hale whispered in my ear —'Now do call often, Miss Marshall. I am so lonely here—no society that I can relish at all. We were told at Concord, that we should find the friendship of your family a most desirable thing; that you, Miss Marshall, were reckoned the most beautiful and accomplished young lady in Boscawen, except Miss Emma Hale. By the way, what a ludicrous comparison! They told us that your brother is one of the most talented and promising young men in the county; and that your family is one of the most respectable. So, I do assure you, Miss Marshall, we shall make it quite an object to get up an intimacy with your family.'

"I was very *brusque*, I know. I bowed slightly, and then turned away to take leave of the Hoberts. Miss Hale blushed, but I did not care. Her malicious thrust at you deserved it all. And I look upon this whole affair of turning you out of doors, as most unjust and contemptible. So does father; and he does not hesitate to say so on all occasions. Perhaps your aunt and cousin were not a party in this; but they are acting a part quite as dishonorable in their spiteful insinuations against you. They seem to take the love all Boscawen has for you, as so much hate for themselves; and, hence, they seize every opportunity to place you in a disadvantageous position.

"Miss Hale has been informed that it is supposed that brother will marry you. She showed much disappointment and vexation; and they say she never mentions you since, without a toss of her ugly head and a curl of her ugly lip. Now, I do not 'set down aught in malice,' for she is positively ugly—diminutive to dwarfishness in stature, unco' in form, sallow in hue, and affected in the extreme in her manner—I cannot find one redeeming feature in her face, form, or character. Oh, I have no patience! And this same lady wishes to get up an intimacy with our family, because, forsooth, she has heard that it is one of the most respectable in town; because brother is talented, and I am handsome! Out upon such pretensions, founded upon such consideration! I detest them, and all who cherish them, most heartily. *Eh bien!* there is no use of scolding, else I would scold all night.

"I have some beautiful pressed flowers for you. They are natives of the 'Far West,' and were sent me by sister Jane. She was correct in her conjectures when she said—'I fear they will lose half their value, now your friend Emma is not there to admire and share them with you.' I shall retain them for you.

"Father will go to Boston in three or four weeks; and remember you almost promised to come *home* with him. '*Io triumphe!*' I am ready to fly at the thought! I shall write a bit for him to leave when he goes down; and he will call for you on his return. Now do not disappoint me, dear Emma, for it will almost break my heart if you don't come.

Your own, KATE."

She did write, and her communication fixed Emma's determination not to go to Boscawen. The subjoined is an extract:

"Your aunt and cousin seem to delight in removing every vestige of your taste in the house, yard, and garden. The pretty little pond which your father planned with so much care, has been destroyed by turning the brook from the garden. What desecration! It was the prettiest brook I ever saw—so full of its Hogarthian windings—and then its *miniature* cascades—how they reminded me of Cowper's

'Rills that slip
Through the cleft rock, and chiming as they fall
Upon loose pebbles,'

and of a thousand other delightful things! They have filled its bed with *dirt*, and placed a huge mound for flowers on the site of the pond! 'Tis vastly too high—flowers will never grow on it, except near the base; and, besides, it is not half so elegant in its outline as those of yours that they levelled to form this colossus of theirs. They have removed the trellis about the door, and let the woodbine to scrambling over the side of the house. And still more barbarous, they have had the house painted a very pale green. Now, the universal verdict of taste is in favor of white for cottages; and what could induce them to make such changes but a sort of Goth and Vandal spirit of extermination? I know I should feel wretchedly to see my home subjected to such a reckless metamorphosis; and I don't know how you, all sensitive as you are, can bear it.

"But, dear Emma, I would a thousand times rather be the sufferer as you are, than a participator in the infliction of such wrongs. Perhaps I am partial in this; but it seems to me that they will not be permitted by a just Providence to go unpunished. The fatherless, you know, my beloved friend, are God's peculiar care; and I feel that he regards wrongs done them, with much stronger disapprobation than those inflicted on others; and that He will, in this case, order all things for your good. I hope that you too have this trust, and that it will console you now when you so much need its soothing influences.

"I have been below, talking with mother of the past. And now is our favorite hour. I have sat here musing until recent occurrences seem like a dream. I almost expect to see your light dress through the shrubbery, or your handkerchief waving for me to join you, or to hear your voice break out upon the stillness in laughter or song. When I turn from such dreams, the reality is ten-fold heart-sickening; and even the thought that I am soon to meet you, fails to lift the sadness that has settled down upon my spirits like a dark pall.

"Mother says—'Tell the dear girl that I think of her every hour, and that I pray for her happiness with that of my own children. Beg her not to disappoint us.' Father will deliver his messages in *propria personæ*. I should doubtless have 'some most pretty things to say' from Edward, but he has called at Captain Parker's. Report says he is partial to Maria, but I do not believe it.

"Next Friday we meet—remember, dear Emma.

Till then, yours as ever, KATE."

Emma was affected beyond description by the contents of this letter. Every expression of regret for past joys met an answering pang in her heart. She saw the yard, the garden, brook and pond—she heard her father's manly voice of advice—her mother's soft words of endearment—Catharine's ringing laugh and Edward's gentle tones; and she felt, even as bitterly as at the moment she left Boscawen, that they were lost to her forever. From the sorrow associated with the memory of her parents, she sought not to wean herself. She clung to it as if it were a part of themselves. But not so with others. She would have forgotten

"The woodbine and the rose,
That o'er her early wanderings threw
The fragrance of repose."

She would have given less of her thoughts to those dear friends who, by sharing all her bitter trials and pleasant pastimes,

"Made the course of childhood's ways
A journey of delight."

She wept and prayed in vain. She retired with a weight of sadness at her heart, which prevented repose; and rose the next morning unrefreshed, nervous, and miserable.

Her misfortunes were known to Mrs. Wells and her family. They seemed to regard her as a delicate flower, which had been trampled upon and bruised until it was nearly destroyed in everthing but its fragrance, and did everything in their power to shield her from further suffering. There was an abrupt officiousness in the inquiries and sympathetic expressions of some, from which Emma would have shrunk painfully, but for a just appreciation of the kindness of their motives. Others were more delicate and more effectual in their ministries. Theirs was "the meed of love's kind words," of those noiseless little attentions that are neither needed nor offered in moments of happiness. One of them flung her arms around her waist, and tenderly kissed her cheek *en passant*. Another brought her only a rose—a beautiful one, just sent her from Chelmsford—and placed it in Emma's bosom. She could eat no breakfast; and a lady who sat near her silently left the table, and returning with a slice of cake, she laid it upon Emma's plate.

"Now, dear Emma, you must eat that," said she. "'Tis some my mother sent me—a *nondescript*, nameless sort, which I would *dub* 'Harrison Cake,' but that this name has already been appropriated. Perhaps 'Farmer's Cake' would do, for it is shortened with cream, sweetened with maple sugar, and spiced with carraway."

The cake was nice, but its chief value to Emma laid in the kindness that offered it.

Emma had removed to a pleasant room on the second floor containing but one bed. Her room-mate was a lovely girl—one whom she found, and to whom she became strongly attached, in the mill. She was induced to go to Mrs. Wells' by her love for Emma, and her society was invaluable to her. Her mind had acquired a strength,

and her manners a polish, rather unusual in country girls in any station, by advantages similar to those enjoyed by Emma, except that they were conferred by a sister, whose husband had recently involved himself in bankruptcy, by injudicious pecuniary management To her Emma revealed every thought, as she would have done to a sister, and she met sympathy and affection as warm and sincere as a sister could have offered. They were inseparable. They worked side by side in the mill, sat together at table, and always walked arm-in-arm to and from their work. They attended the same meeting—were both teachers in the same Sabbath school, and their classes occupied contiguous places. They went together to the chambers of the sick. Both had been afflicted and somewhat similarly. This constituted a strong tie. When melancholy, they found in each other's society

"The sad relief
That misery loves the fellowship of grief."

No one knows as the factory girl knows the value of such friendship. No one feels as she feels the need of "something around which the heart may cling" and fix its tendrils; and I know from a long and happy experience, that no one—be her station what it may—finds more sincere, disinterested friends than she does. The factory girl is not loved because she is great, because her family is rich and popular, because "not to know her argues oneself unknown," not because she gives pleasant parties and wears splendid dresses; but because she is good and kind. We may often hear them say—"I love A because she is so like a sister to me;" or, "I shall always like B because she was the first one who came to me, and treated me kindly when I was a stranger;" or, "I do love C, she is so kind to those who want help—so intelligent, and such a peacemaker."

I have a friend who was my playmate in infancy, and whom, in after years, I followed to a factory in D——. She is now married to one of the first men in the city of ——, and mistress of one of the most splendid mansions there. A few months since I visited her. She was as intelligent and beautiful as ever—the very child of nature and simplicity. She had in her husband, her little daughter, and in the elegancies and comforts of home, all that one could desire. "But I think that part of my life spent in the factory its happiest portion," said she, as we were comparing the present and past. "There was such an entire freedom from all care! and I had such good friends. How I did love them, and how they loved me! I have never known friendships like them anywhere else; and I am convinced that I never shall find them."

She looked down upon her daughter who was nestling in a rich rug at her side; and her eyes were filled with tears when she turned them to me.

"I could not leave my little Ellen and my husband, and go back to the mill, and live," continued she. "But I *was* as happy then, as mortals can be in any situation."

CHAPTER IX.

To her friends, Emma was indebted for all the happiness she found under her first trials. She sought in vain for that resignation and trust in Heaven which always soothed her when thinking of the death of her parents. She found it easy to trace this event to the hand of Him "who chasteneth for our profit," and to believe it all just and merciful; but the wrongs inflicted by her uncle, she could impute only to his injustice; and she could command neither reconciliation nor indifference to them. She repaired to the mill more dejected than she had been before since the day of her entrance there.

Between Emma and her first overseer, Mr. Adams, there existed the familiar intercourse of brother and sister. With a tact and kindness for which overseers are justly distinguished, he saw that she was unhappy, and set himself about removing the cause, whatever it might be. He put her machinery in still better order; and, when this expedient failed, told her that she might have that day for rest, if she pleased. Emma was affected by his kindness, she dared not trust her voice in reply, and so only shook her head.

"Are you sick, Emma?" he inquired.

Her eyes filled, and she turned to a window to conceal her emotion. He followed her.

"Tell me what has happened, dear Emma; perhaps I can assist you."

She attempted to answer, but could not, except by a look that told the gratitude she could not utter.

"Oh, that you would give me a right to protect you—the right of a husband. You would make me the happiest of men. Will you not, my Emma?"

A "clap of thunder in a cloudless sky," would not have startled Emma more; and all her other sufferings were instantly lost in the consciousness that she must inflict pain on a noble heart, that she loved just as she would have loved a brother. She saw that he trembled, and his voice was almost inaudible from emotion.

She burst into tears and wept like a child. Mr. Adams would have taken her to his heart and soothed her to rest, but her manner of receiving his declaration forbade the hope that he might even do this; and he stood by her side in a miserable state of doubt and suspense, forgetful that there were all about them witnesses to this scene, until Emma's friend, Alice Gordon, approached.

"What has happened, Mr. Adams?" said she. "Emma, are you sick?"

Mr. Adams did not take his eyes from a bit of paper he was tearing in pieces. Emma only said, "ask him to let me go out."

Alice asked, obtained a mechanical "yes," and accompanied Emma to the door. Emma put on her bonnet, and kissed Alice's cheek in silence; and then left her to conjecture the cause of her agitation. She repaired immediately to her room, fell on her knees and buried her face in her handkerchief. Long and earnestly she prayed for calmness under her accumulated trials, and for strength and wisdom to bear her safely through them.

And she found them at last. The struggle was great, but it ended in a corresponding conquest. She rose with a quiet and elevation of feeling seldom experienced before; and repaired immediately to the mill. She met Mr. Adams on the stairs. There was at first a trepidation in his manner, but it soon fled before the perfect calmness and self-control of Emma. She assured him with perfect candor, of her sisterly regard for him; "and do not, my friend," said she, "add to my unhappiness by withdrawing your friendship, or by allowing my decision to disturb you at all."

"It shall not. It is sufficient for me to possess the friendship of such a girl. So, hereafter, I am your own brother George. Prove that you are my own sister Emma," he added smiling, "by telling me what disturbed you so much this morning."

Emma had Catherine's last letter in her reticule. She gave it to Mr. Adams, and went to her work with a light heart and a happy face. She wondered, now, that she could be so distressed by Catharine's communications.

"With such friends as you, my Alice, Mr. Adams, Mrs. Wells, her boarders, and others, about me, what can I expect more?" said she to Alice, after she had related all that had happened.

In the same room were two girls who had long cherished hopes of securing the heart of Mr. Adams, and as long been mutually envious and jealous. They entered the mill light-hearted, innocent girls; and for a brief period were very intimate. But a long course of unhappy indulgences roused their feelings, rendered them irritable, and, under real or imaginary provocations, excessively malicious. Their jealous fears received a new direction and a new *impetus*, when they saw that Emma was becoming a favorite with Mr. Adams, and from that time their intimacy was as strong as their alienation had been. They worked so far from Emma that they knew nothing about her, but that she was an exceedingly lovely girl, and exceedingly beloved by all who knew her. Many were their insinuations about her haughtiness, pride and vanity, from time to time, as new attentions paid to her by Mr. Adams, excited fresh alarms. But their hostilities did not become open and decided, until their jealousies received a confirmation from the scene just described.

"Well, they say Emma Hale has caught Adams at last," said Laura, as she seated herself beside a girl who worked near her. "Now I hope she is satisfied, and she is evidently. See! Caroline. She is doubtless telling Alice all about it. Alice will not relish it; for I know she liked Adams, and I have thought lately that he liked her about as well as he did Emma. I despise them both."

"Why? You are not acquainted with them, are you?"

"No, and I don't wish to be. To see them is enough for me. From what I heard of Emma, when she first came to Lowell, the less *respectable* girls have to do with her the better. I am afraid she is really a bad girl."

"Why, how you talk! Do you really suppose she is?" said Caroline, rising to see to her work. Laura saw that her friend was attending to hers, and followed Caroline to her loom.

"Yes," answered she. "I fear there is no mistake about it; it came so correct to me. One of Mrs. Wells boarders told me, when

Emma first went there, that all thought she went there to board in preference to other places, because Mrs. Wells had gentlemen boarders. I have never told this openly, but now I don't care. Mr. Adams is too good a fellow to be caught by such a trapper."

"He ought to know it, hadn't he?"

"Yes; but I would not be the one to tell him for the world."

"Nor I; but I know who would—Dorcas Holt. I would tell her about it. She loves to torment Adams, and hates Emma as bad as you do; for she says Adams tells Monroe to give her all No. 4 webs, and you know they are the best. And Dorcas don't care for anybody. I never saw such a girl. She would as lief make all Lowell mad with her as not."

And so it was. Reckless in principle, violent in passion, regardless alike of the good and ill will of the world, she hesitated at no act that might have a tendency to make those she disliked as wretched as herself. Such characters are "few and far between," in factory, as in other communities. They are generally rendered thus degraded by misfortunes. Perhaps no mother guarded their infancy and childhood; but cruel and selfish guardians tasked them, abused them, until all kindly feelings were driven out from their young hearts. Perhaps some natural deformity was laid upon them, in consequence of which they suffered the taunts and neglect of their associates, and the lashings of their own pride, until bitter thoughts took possession of their minds to the exclusion of all others. Perhaps in an hour of severe temptation their reputation was sacrificed; and for theseorn of the world, they gave only scorn.

When we think of these things, we know not whether most to despise or pity such beings. We feel involuntary emotions of disgust. We would shun them as we would the poisoned arrow, were we to act on purely selfish principles; and we might pass them by in our pride, if we did not know, "who it is that maketh us to differ."

"Ye high, exalted, virtuous dames,
Ty'd up in godly laces,
Before ye gie poor *frailty* names,
Suppose a change o' cases—"

says Burns. And we will "suppose a change o' cases." "What have we that we did not receive?" What happy and good impulse did we feel in childhood, which was not directly or indirectly the result of kind deeds, or kind words from our parents, friends and teachers? What high moral object have we accomplished—what high moral purpose is stirring within us now, that owes not its origin to moral teachings, falling on hearts prepared for their reception? Perhaps none. Then what should we have been, if we had been left to ignorance, neglect and cruelty? Ah! even as Dorcas Holt was, had not a miracle been interposed in our favor. Where then is our plea for pride? It cannot be found. It is our part to soothe, rather than to irritate such unfortunate beings. Probably there is not one in the class, who might not ultimately be reclaimed, if *all* were to exercise a proper degree of the charity which "thinketh no evil, which vaunteth not itself, and is not puffed up, and which seeketh its neighbor's good equally with its own."

Probably Dorcas would not have grown more and still more hardened in feeling and practice, if her habitual ebullitions of ill-temper and malice, had been allowed to pass at their real value, instead of being remembered and acted upon, as just causes of malice and ill-temper in others. But so it was, that she had scolded her overseers, until they cared little whether her machinery operated correctly or not. There was not a girl in the room, who was not in some way a real affliction to her.

"Sall Elliot! if you don't clear out with yourself!" said she to Sarah Elliot, who upset her seat in passing through her aisle, while on a frisk—and Sarah was just such a merciless wag, that she repeated the round, again upset the seat, then looked round and laughed to see Dorcas scold. But, alas for poor Dorcas! In her anger at the first offence, which was wholly accidental, she slammed her loom with her shuttle in a wrong position, and broke out nearly one eighth of her warp. Her eyes flashed with anger. She threw her shutter on the floor with such violence as to break it, and this added to her vexation. She attracted the notice of almost every girl in the room, but what cared she? Perhaps one half hour before this, she resolved that she would govern herself better, and deserve, that she might receive some degree of respect; and had Sarah turned, replaced the seat, apologized in a proper manner for her offence, and avoided repeating it, how much of sin and degradation would it have spared poor Dorcas. She was angry in an instant, 'tis true; but the feeling would have been but momentary under kind and judicious treatment. And surely Sarah would have been happier afterward. Yet she did it not in malice *prepense*, but in love of fun and carelessness.

Dorcas incurred much enmity, and, of course, imbibed much, by her excessive selfishness. For instance, in times of scarcity of work, when each girl was allowed her share, and required to wait her share, she took the most dishonest measures to secure an extra allowance. She returned to the mill before others did; and if she found one tenth as much in another's box, as she had concealed about her work, she did not hesitate to appropriate it to herself. She concealed it, not to hide her theft, for this was evinced by the fact that she never waited as others did, but that those half as miserly as herself, might not get them from interest, and those as roguish as Sarah Elliot, to annoy her.

And perhaps Dorcas was thus selfish because she had received no pecuniary benefits, expected none, and hence felt necessitated, and indeed inclined to provide amply for herself. This does not vindicate her course; but it may be that those who so justly blamed her, would have done just so, if they had met "a change of cases." Neither do all these considerations lessen the evils of malice, ill-temper and covetousness. Yet they furnish high inducements to the more favored, to treat those in whom they detect these vices, with pity and forbearance. We owe their exercise to ourselves and to others. Our own hearts are made happier and better by them; and others are incalculably benefitted.

So reasoned Emma, as a knowledge of the wrongs heaped upon her by Laura, Mary, Dorcas, and others who had been drawn into their plot, reached her.

CHAPTER X.

THEY had done their work. They hinted that Emma was a disreputable character; and many unacquainted with her, though not disposed to be unnecessarily censorious, reported this for a fact. *Their* testimony was not to be controverted, surely; and in a few days there was scarcely a girl in that mill and contiguous ones, unacquainted with Emma, who had not heard, and who did not believe, or fear, that Emma, to use a wicked and most significant phrase, was "no better than she should be." In vain her friends, and this class embraced all who knew her personally, opposed the tide that was setting in against her. Indeed, whenever they attempted it, they found themselves in the condition of one "beating the air;" for unsubstantial as this element were the charges preferred against her. They sought in vain, at first, to trace them to their starting point. No one circulated them on their own responsibility, but with all it was—"They say," &c.

"Only think!" said one; "they say this Emma Hale, they have all thought so much of, is, to say the best of her, no better than she ought to be, in all conscience."

"What! Emma Hale? Oh! I recollect. She works in Adams' room, and is called one of the handsomest girls on the 'Corporation.' What has she done, pray?"

"I'll die if I can find out. I have asked nearly a hundred if I have one; and they all say—'why they say she is really a bad girl,' or something of that sort. One thing is plain enough—she is terribly proud, and she couldn't expect to prosper; for Paul says in the book of Revelations, "Pride goeth before destruction; and a haughty spirit before a fall.'"

"Pshaw! there is no such a passage in Revelations. As to this fuss, I have no doubt that it all sprang from envy, and is kept alive by her votaries. I have known just such instances in our mill. Factory girls are fond of excitement in any shape."

And it is true that factory girls do love excitement. There is much in the monotonous tenor of the lives of most of them every way calculated to generate and strengthen this passion. Of course, just such fits of listlessness and ennui come over one when a factory girl, as are felt in every other situation. Perhaps their work requires little of their attention and labor. They are tired of talking, and cannot find a subject upon which they can fix their thoughts and be interested. When under such visitations at home they can relieve themselves by walking, making a few calls, taking a new book, or a new piece of work. In the mill they can do no such thing, and hence, allow themselves to gather amusement from events which, in other situations, would fail to attract the least notice. If a marriage or death occurs in their midst—if Miss A is praised, or Miss B censured—if Miss C is engaged, and Miss D *almost*—and if there happens to be an insufficiency of incident to give a high zest to the affair, the *chinks* are filled by conjectures, which become, as they are passed round,

matters of sober fact, and without intentional falsehood on the part of any one.

But this species of excitement is not *the* panacea. This is formed in the sportiveness of some young witch who will not be sad herself, or see others so, if she can prevent it. From the dulness of the day, or some other cause, she finds heaviness gathering upon her spirits. She looks about her, and reads the same in the dull eyes and sluggish movements of all around. She sees some standing at their windows, some picking the by no means redundant leaves from their plants, some few talking, some engaged with their work, and others walking or sitting about in idleness. With all these is the same mechanical listlessness of manner.

"This will never do," says Fanny. As she hastily puts her work in such order that she can be absent from it some time with safety, one, at all accustomed to observe her movements, would know what to anticipate. Her eyes sparkle, and a fresh bloom is on her cheeks. Fun plays in every feature, and lurks in every dimple. She is never at a loss what to do; for everything she does, amuses. She strips the leaves from a green bough she has had hanging from her window; makes a *stick* of it, and stealthily runs up behind one who sits leaning her head on her hand, "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancies." All are watching Fanny but her victim. She is unconscious of her approach, until she is aroused from her reverie by a hearty application of Fanny's rod. She starts, laughs, and runs. Fanny follows as seriously as if it were all a matter of duty and necessity. She is often retarded in her progress by some arm as roguish as herself; but she at length overtakes the object of her "wild chase;" perhaps not, however, until she is breathless with running and laughing, and throws herself on the floor. Fanny then applies the rod quite heartily, and runs to her work to arrange it for another frolic.

She takes a cord and ties a girl fast to her loom, in spite of strong resistance. She makes a "rag baby" of her handkerchief and bits of cloth; and while a neighbor is busy with one loom, she ties it to some part of the other that is constantly in motion; and when the owner turns about, the puppet is swinging or dancing before her.

Perhaps she retaliates on Fanny by stopping her looms and carrying her shuttles to the farther corner of the room; and while she is in quest of them, by filling her alley with her own and her neighbor's seats. Others are drawn in; and those not actually engaged, look on and laugh. They are interrupted at length, it may be, by the entrance of visitors, or of their free overseer. They do not fear him. They would not hesitate to tell him all about it. But it is understood that he shall not witness such sports. He has no objections to them, and he has reasons for none. Their work may be somewhat neglected for the time, yet not much; for there are non-participants all about—kind-hearted, but serious girls, who ever and anon pay the neglected looms a visit.

And all feel better after such recreations. They give their nerves and their whole system a healthy spring. Nor are their good effects lost on the moral nature. The girls all love each other better; feel more like a band of sisters, from the pleasures and helps they receive and confer. All love Fanny, A, B, and C, because they broke up the monotony that was so oppressive to them. Fanny, A, B, and C, love all on the principle—"Love begets love."

Happy is it for factory girls when such innocent measures are interposed; and when they can turn from them to serious and elevated thought and conversation. But alas, for them, when in their thirst for excitement, they seize upon the bitter waters of scandal and contention! Alas, for them, when the rod of a Dorcas, or a Laura, opens the fountain.

To them it is so important that the intellect be refined and invigorated by education, the affections purified and directed by the Christian graces, as to the factory girl. Thrown, in a great measure, upon herself, by an occupation that leaves her nearly destitute of cares, what can she do if she has not treasured up sources of pleasing and profitable thought? Among strangers of every shade of character, whom, and on whom she is obliged to exert an influence in some way, how can she discharge her responsibilities faithfully, if she is not guided by the precepts and spirit of the religion of Jesus? Especially if she finds herself in the situation of Emma, what can she do? Well for her, if, like Emma, she can pass through the fiery ordeal unscathed.

She suffered intensely; she sometimes longed to pass at once to the rest of heaven, that she might be far away from the trials of this earth; but in all her sufferings she found soothing tendencies in the zeal and tenderness of her friends, in a consciousness of integrity, and a trust in Heaven. There infused a dignity and sweet endurance into her manner, which were a thousand times more effectual in counteracting the attempts of her enemies, than loud extenuations and invectives could have been.

CHAPTER XI.

"I do not believe one word of this scandal about Emma Hale," said Abby Mason, on her return from a call on a friend in Mr. Adams' room. "Cousin Maria works near her, and she says she is the best creature she ever saw in her life; and that she loves her as she does her sisters. Maria actually shed tears when she was telling me what Emma had suffered, and how patiently she had borne it all. She says she has shed more tears than she would have caused for worlds; but has not appeared to be indignant for one moment. They have traced the stories to three girls—Dorcas, Laura, and Mary, I think are their names. Emma knows it; yet when the girls all turned against them, and the superintendent threatened to discharge them, she interceded for them as if they had been her best friends. She feared it would make them worse to treat them with such severity; and, besides, she could not bear that any one should suffer on her account. She even cried when she found that her efforts were likely to be unsuccessful.

"Some one told Dorcas what affected her so much, and the poor girl wept like a little child. Maria says she has not been known to shed a tear before since she went there—she has seemed too hardened. As soon as she became sufficiently calm, she went to Emma and attempted to ask her forgiveness. She could only say a few words, however, and Emma could not speak; but she took her hand, and they both cried together. Maria says she and a good many others joined them; but theirs were tears of pleasure. Even Mr. Adams could not bear it, and left the room.

"Dorcas was taken sick last night; and Emma, and her friend Alice, called to see her this morning at breakfast time. A girl who boards with Dorcas says, that Emma gave her some medicine, bathed her head, and arranged her bed to make her more comfortable. Dorcas was very much affected by her kindness. 'If I had always been treated so kindly, I should not have been what I am now,' said she. 'But I have no right to complain, for I have been treated as well as I deserved.'

"And from what Maria says, I suppose she has been very mischievous. But she says they are all going to be as kind and pleasant as they can to her now; and not mind it if she does get angry. She has no mother or home; and perhaps she has had trouble enough to spoil the best disposition. As Maria says, there is something dreadful in the thought that in neglecting or abusing her, they might be wronging one whose mother loved her as well as ours do us, and who now looks down from her home in Heaven and pities her poor daughter. As for Emma Hale, I believe as Maria says, that 'she is one of the best girls in the world!' I am sure I never despised myself so much as I do now, when I recollect how I too helped to swell the current against her. I never will say anything against one again, unless I *know* they are guilty, and feel it my duty to expose them—so help me God." The tears which started to her eyes as she spoke, and the faithfulness with which she kept her resolution proved her sincerity.

A severe fit of sickness finished for Dorcas the work that Emma's undeserved kindness began. "Old things passed away, and all things became new" to her. She seemed in a new world. Her heart was full of love to God, to his creatures, and everything he had made. Every flower and every shrub, every song of bird and rivulet, and every act of kindness conferred on her, spoke of the goodness of her Heavenly Father. Many times in a day, tears of gratitude filled her eyes; and—"Oh, my God, I thank thee!" was the constant language of her heart and lips.

Seldom are failings of such an inveterate character so suddenly and permanently eradicated. 'Tis true, she met few provocations; for she soon gained the love and respect of all about her. But she met the same accidents with her work which had hitherto caused her so much vexation. These failed to affect her at all, except when they brought recollections of past folly to grieve her. Toward Emma her attachment was almost idolatrous. She was older by some three or four years, and she appeared to feel for her all the tenderness and solicitude of a mother; and subsequently, when Emma was taken ill, she removed to Mrs. Wells', and would not be induced to leave her bedside until assured that she was out of danger.

"Why," said she to Mrs. Wells, "I feel as if I could not live if Emma were to be taken away from me. But I know I am selfish in this, for she is more fit for heaven than a world of sin like this."

Emma's sickness ended in a debility which forbade her return to the mill. She could leave her room, and walk some in the yard, but day after day passed without bringing any accession to her strength or appetite. Mrs. Wells and her boarders did everything in their power to make her comfortable and happy. She felt grateful to them and to Heaven for this kindness; but oh, how her heart yearned for the quiet of her youthful home, and the care of her youthful friends! Mrs. Wells prepared many nice little bits for her, but the sight and flavor of so much provision destroyed her relish for it. She felt as if she could eat if she might sit down to a small table with a few loved friends; but where could she go?

So sad is the condition of hundreds of our mill girls. And, alas! there are even darker pictures. The poor sickly widow drags out a wretched existence there. Grief for her husband's loss, anxiety for her orphan ones, and her toils for their subsistence, are fast sapping the fountains of her life away. She lies down to sorrow, and she rises to sorrow. Every night her pillow is drenched by her tears, and every day witnesses her struggles to bear herself up a little longer before she lies down to die. Perhaps the only earthly solace that can reach one in such a situation—the sympathy of kind hearts—is denied her. Perhaps she has never told her trials to the happy young creatures about her; and hence they regard her as a morose woman—it may be, "A cross old maid." But if the half were told them, their hearts would instinctively bleed for her. Bitterer tears would scald their cheeks than they ever shed for themselves; and they would endeavor to soothe, if they might not heal, her sorrows.

And there are young girls, too, who, when well, spend every farthing for dress, without one thought of the "wet day" that might come to them. Most wretched is their condition, if protracted illness is laid upon them.

And there are those, who, in sickness, have no such kind friends to minister to them, as Emma had, and who suffer from neglect. Perhaps they incurred this neglect by an injudicious course in health; but their sufferings are none the less acute for this.

Much of this kind of affliction might be averted by a little sacrifice on the part of home friends. One should not be left to chronic disease or premature death, which might be prevented by a slight expenditure of time or money. If she has no parents, brothers, or sisters, let an uncle, aunt, or cousin, take her to their care. If she has none of these, let some old neighbor do this. He may be poor, but he can give her a cordial welcome to his little home. With quiet, plain fare, and kind attentions, she may soon be restored to health and happiness; and then, if the consciousness of having done a good act is not a sufficient reward, she will cheerfully add a pecuniary recompense.

CHAPTER XII.

EMMA became nervous and dejected. This she knew would retard her recovery, but she struggled in vain against it. Everything was dark to her. If she turned to the past, she could only see what she had lost; if to the present, what she was suffering; if to the future, long and distressing illness—perhaps death.

"I know I do wrong to repine, but I cannot help it," said she to Alice, as they lay locked in each other's arms.

"Oh, that it were not so far to my mountain home. I would take you there; and how happy we might be among the birds and flowers! With a daily wagon or horseback drive, with pleasant rambles through fields, pastures, and woods, with the strawberries which my little Agnes would pick for you, and the glass of new milk which mother would give you morning and night, I do think you would soon be well," said Arabel Vincent, on the following morning, as she and Alice supported Emma in her little walk.

Emma thought of the Marshalls, and longed to nestle down with them. But she dreaded seeing her home. She received a letter from Catharine soon after she was taken ill. This was still unanswered. She dreaded informing her of her sickness; for she knew there would follow solicitations, which she would find it hard to resist, and with which she would not wish to comply. But the letter must be answered; and she sat down with writing materials before her.

"A letter for you, Emma! Now you will be glad, won't you?" said Charles Wells, as he entered the sitting-room. It was from Catharine. She wrote as follows:

"My dearest Emma—Now, my sweet friend, you are ours. Father saw a gentleman last evening, who has just returned from Lowell, and he says you are not very well, but hustle to work. So, father will start for Lowell to-morrow morning, with the commands of Mr. Pierce, mother, and all Boscawen, up to my identical self, not to return without you. We purposely allow you no chance to forbid his going; and as he goes expressly to bring you, you surely will not refuse. Argo, you will be e'en obliged to come. For I wouldn't come and you were obliged to!

"In four days you will be here. My heart flies every time I think of it, and I am sure I shall be happier than I ever was before in my life. Mother is more quiet, but not a whit less pleased. She is putting our garden, yard, and house-plants in nice order, because 'Emma is so fond of flowers.' Every child in the village has already heard that you are coming, and as early as it is in the day, they are bringing offerings for 'the dear, dear Emma.' They have brought flowers and our vases are filled. One has brought some strawberries, 'to make sauce of for Emma,' and Sarah Pierce says she is going to get some for you every day while they last. Frank has just brought your old canaries, and hung their cage close by the easy chair in the sitting-room. He, of course, supposes that just the best seat will be given to you. I have nearly cried several times at these artless testimonies of their love for you, and I know they will affect you.

"Nor are these all. Old Mrs. Haines came in this morning, while we were breakfasting, to ascertain whether it is a *real* fact that you are coming. Now, she says, she shall have an opportunity to do something for one who has done everything for her. So she is preparing a panacea for you; I forget what she calls it, but it is made up of *roots* and *herbs* 'which no man could number.' This, she is positive, will cure you.

"'Poor girl!' said our good minister, last evening, when we told him of your sickness, 'I hope she remembers, in all these afflictions, that, 'whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.'

"We have planned several excursions, picnics, and so on, which are to come off as soon as you are able to attend to them. As for my own self, I can 'do nothing at all, jist,' but 'whirl round like a cat in the smoke,' as old Aunt Hally says, I am so strangely excited. I am writing at father's table. He sits at my side, reading the last 'Cultivator,' and I have startled him several times, since I began, by a loud and long 'ha! ha!' He looks up, smiles, says, 'What a mad-cap you are, Kate!' or something of that sort, and then goes to reading again. Well, who wouldn't laugh? Laughing don't satisfy me. I want to jump up and clap my hands. I wonder what father would think—I will. There—I feel better, and as for father, he has laughed himself out of the room.

"I must stop this rhodomontade, or I shall miss the mail. Ed. is at Cambridge yet; I wish he was here. Your own KATE."

It would be useless to attempt a description of Emma's emotions on reading this letter; they were so conflicting. Love for her friends at Boscawen, and pleasure at the prospect of seeing them so soon—dread of meeting her uncle's family—of having her troubles all renewed in seeing her home so changed, and in visiting old haunts—attachment to her Lowell friends, and regrets at the thought of leaving them—all struggled for the mastery. She sat an hour, just like a statue. She then went to her room, and threw herself on her bed, in a state of complete exhaustion, physical and mental. Her efforts to regain composure were at length partially successful, and she went below to apprise Mrs. Wells of her intentions. Her calmness soon fled before this lady's agitation, and when the bell called the girls to dinner, she went to her room, and left Mrs. Wells to inform them of her plans. Every vestige of Mrs. Wells' accustomed cheerfulness had vanished, and the change was immediately observed by her boarders.

"What has happened, Mrs. Wells?" asked Alice: "is Emma"—

"She is no worse; but she has just received a letter from Boscawen. Marshall is coming down to-morrow, to carry her home with him, and I believe that we shall never see her more."

She spoke with difficulty, and left the room as soon as she concluded. A simultaneous burst of emotion followed this announcement. Not a dry eye could have been found in the room, and some sobbed as if their hearts were breaking.

To Dorcas and Alice this intelligence was particularly startling. Emma filled the very penetralia in the heart of each; and a feeling of utter loneliness came over them, which they could neither overcome nor conceal. They went immediately to Emma's room. She had been endeavoring to gain that composure which she knew she would need for the struggle before her; but she burst into tears as soon as she saw them, and they wept in each other's arms. Others followed—some entered; others just went to the door, and then turned to their own rooms to weep alone. And there were few

others, whose emotion was chiefly sympathetic. They shed a few tears, then ate hearty dinners, and returned to the mills, thinking alternately of Emma, and of the twenty-four pieces of cloth they would get that week. But the majority of them were sincerely sorrowful. She had been kind to them when they were strangers, or sick, or troubled! She was a poor orphan, sick and afflicted, and they pitied her.

But most of all they sorrowed lest they should see her face no more. There was something solemn to all, in the thought that they might never look upon her face again, until the trials of life and of death had passed, and they met in eternity.

To those who loved her "as a sister," this was a harrowing reflection. Emma herself felt a sort of presentiment that she should never return, founded upon the state of her health. Her symptoms were certainly somewhat alarming, and they were daily becoming more so. She had failed much in strength in the last few days; and when she took leave of her minister, her pupils in the Sabbath school, her overseers, and friends, it was with the conviction that it was a final one.

The factory girl only knows what a factory girl suffers in such circumstances. The school girl weeps when she leaves the companions with whom she has been pleasantly associated one or two terms; but her emotion has not the intenseness and permanency of the factory girls. And the reason is sufficiently obvious. She leaves home only for a few weeks. She is happy in the pursuit of her studies; or if she is not, she does not seek happiness so much in her school-mates, as in the thought of going home so soon. She has few toils, few difficulties, and therefore asks little sympathy, and wants little. I speak comparatively. And, so, few or none love her on the principle so finely developed by Miss Sedgwick, in her "Home"—

"We love every creature to whom we are kind."

But the mill is the mill-girl's home. She stays a year—perhaps two years, and perhaps ten. And when she leaves finally, she may be going to a pleasant home, to as kind parents, brothers, and sisters as ever blessed mortal; but she feels in her heart that she would rather stay just where she is, with just those friends forever. Her minister, her friends in the church, mills, and boarding-house, all say, "We cannot do without you;" and she feels that she cannot do without them. True, this is not a universal feeling, but it is extended to all who act well their parts as operatives, boarders, and members of society.

"Now you have lost Emma, we will all be your sisters," said an affectionate young girl, on the night after Emma left, as she came up to Dorcas and Alice, and flung an arm round each, and kissed them.

"Do not say anything kind to me," said Alice, speaking with an effort to conceal emotions which all present found intectious. There was a silence of some minutes, which was broken, at last, by a deep sigh from Dorcas.

"I don't think, myself, that Emma has many years, or even months, for this world. I have seen those who seemed ripe for Heaven, while yet very young; and they are gathered there, as naturally as the grain in harvest to store-houses. I believe Emma is one of this number."

Her manner and tones were as solemn as the grave; and, heightened as their effect was by the gloom of a late twilight hour, they sent a thrill of apprehension to every heart.

CHAPTER XIII.

As Emma proceeded upon her journey, she found the sadness caused by the recent parting gradually yielding to Mr. Marshall's efforts to divert her. They alighted at a parterre, and gathered strawberries; at the plains of L., and B., and gathered wild flowers for Emma's and Catherine's herbariums. In the pretty villages of Nashua, Manchester and Concord, they spent several hours; visited the beautiful cemeteries of the two former places, and the legislature, then in session, in the latter. In the town of M., they came up to a very beautiful garden, near a capacious farm-house, in which an elderly gentleman was at work, training flowers. Mr. Marshall checked his horse.

"What a benevolent countenance!" said Emma, as the gentleman looked up and bowed to them.

"A fine garden, you have, sir," said Mr. Marshall.

"Yes, sir, it is a fine garden; but not so pretty as it was once. Would you like a flower, my young friend?" he added, turning to Emma.

"Yes, I thank you, sir."

"Will you allow this lady to rest herself by a walk in your garden, sir?" asked Mr. Marshall.

"Certainly, certainly—come in;" and he walked round to open the gate, as they drove up and alighted.

"These flowers, even this very root of flowers, were once tended by one as young and fair as yourself, lady. But she lies there, now." He pointed, as he spoke, to a neat little enclosure contiguous to the garden, in which were several graves, shaded by locusts and willows.

Emma's heart was instantly touched by his manner. He saw this and continued. Ours was the happiest family in M., in my first wife's day. My Clara as happy was as the birds she loved so well. She sang from morning till night, and her voice was like the sweetest music to us. But, perhaps I shall tire you, madam."

He drew his hand across his eyes, and darted off a tear that trembled on a lid.

"Oh, no, no! Please to tell me more!" said Emma.

"My first wife died just four years ago. In two years, I married again. I must not speak of that wife—she lies there now, beside Clara. In three months, Clara left home for a Lowell factory; and in six months more, she came home a sad, pale, sickly creature, just ready to drop into the grave. She lived three months. I believe the factory killed her; and when I think of this, and the cause of her going there, in the bitterness of my heart, I exclaim—'Would to God, I had died for thee, my daughter!'"

The old man's whole frame shook, and his tears fell upon the flowers he was gathering for Emma. Mr. Marshall turned away to conceal his emotions; but Emma wept without restraint.

"Was your daughter's name Clara Roberts?" asked Emma at length.

"Yes—did you know her then? What did you know of her?" inquired the old man, grasping her hand.

"Only that she was patient as a lamb in her sickness—that she loved you, sir; and was beloved and lamented by all who knew her."

She had not known her until her sickness. Then she watched by her; and learned from her moanings in her sleep, that she left home on account of an unkind, designing mother-in-law.

They spent an hour with the good old gentleman; visited his fruit-trees, the little cemetery, and a bridal rose-bush in full bloom, which Clara brought from Lowell.

It was late on the second day, when they reached Mr. Marshall's. This was as he designed. He did not wish Emma to see visiters or her old home, until she had been strengthened by a night's repose. Mrs. Marshall met her with a mother's tenderness. Catherine was wild with delight. She cried and laughed, by turns, as she saw how pale Emma was, and then thought how her mother, and Dr. Pierce, would "make her well." Ervin told her of his English rabbits, his incaged squirrel, and his little doves, that she must see as soon as it was morning; and little Lavinia sat on an ottoman close by her side, held her hand, and kept her eyes constantly on her face, until she retired to her room.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dr. Pierce called before breakfast, on the following morning. He was shocked at the alteration in her appearance. By a powerful and and most benevolent effort, he always talked the fastest, and appeared most at ease, when most apprehensive; for he knew the effect the least appearance of alarm in the physician has upon the weak nerves of the invalid.

"Don't you lace, Emma?" said he.

Emma smiled, and shook her head in reply. He pretended not to be convinced, however, until he had encircled her waist with the biggest, ugliest rope he could find, to ascertain how far it would expand by forced expiration. Then he said, as he tried her pulse—"Well, you don't lace; and there is another thing you don't do. You don't get exercise enough. Sluggish pulse, hands as cold as lead—this will never do. You may walk all of the time about your work in the mill; but there is no exercise about it, for body or mind either. Factory girls are mistaken in this. They are careful to keep their windows open, they work, and then they tell about their air and exercise. Why, five minutes walk after breakfast, in open air, would be worth more than all the exercise they can get in the mills in a week. They want something that will set the blood to galloping through their veins; and if I had the power, I would set every factory girl to walk, morning and noon, rain or shine, warm or cold, every moment she could spare from her meals. Instead of

this, they eat, some of them, as if upon a wager; swallow their food before it is half masticated; and then hurry to the mills to clean their machinery or put their work in order. At least, this is what the overseers of Lowell tell me. They cannot board far from the mill; it would hinder them so much. Nonsense! 'Tis a pity they are not obliged, all of them, to walk one half of a mile, or a mile, since a proper regard for their health will not induce them to take time for its preservation.

"And I don't like this practice of *stowing* so many into one little badly ventilated apartment—sometimes six, and sometimes more, for aught I know—in a room that contains none too much air for healthy respiration of one! 'Tis horrid to think of it. Their beds are so near the windows—ten to one—that they cannot have them open without the greatest danger of taking colds; and there they lie, for hours, breathing the same air that has been already breathed a hundred times; and that is scarcely fitter for respiration than pure carbonic acid gas. I don't know who is to blame for this—whether 'tis the girls, the keepers of the boarding-houses, superintendents, agents or proprietors; and I don't care. There is blame somewhere, and humanity calls loudly for its removal.

"The girls look healthier at Newburyport than at any other manufacturing place I have ever visited; and I think it is owing to the superiority of their boarding system. They have but one boarding-house—that is one large house purposely for factory girls, if I recollect right. So the girls board at home, or with brother or sister, or distant relative or friend, in small families—many of them walking one half of a mile. This is as it should be, if indeed the system is practicable in places so large as Lowell.

"But I suppose I have lectured long enough. Emma, I am going up this morning to see to my farm, four miles from here—you know where it is, and what a pleasant drive it is. I have a new nondescript sort of carriage, somewhere between a wagon and a cart. You have seen it, and laughed at it a hundred times, Kate. Well. Emma, I will take this, with my wife on the seat with me. Then I shall put in a board for a seat, fixed in just such a way that it will require all the skill of its occupants to retain their seats. This will be for you and Captain Baker's wife; she is just about as *spleeny* as you are.

"I shan't give you much medicine. Catharine you may administer a cold shower bath every morning at four. Your breakfast bell rings at seven, Mrs. Marshall. Well, Emma, you will have time to put yourself and your room in order before that time. After breakfast you may take a horseback, cart, or wagon drive; go to work in the garden, or make a round of calls, as you please. Next week you may rake hay awhile every forenoon. I like a good old rule of our fathers'—

'After dinner, sit a while,
After supper, walk a mile!'

"I must not task you too far; after dinner you may even sleep a while. Kate and Sarah have walks enough planned to occupy you after tea these two months. 'Tis seven; and my wife waits. I will call for you at ten, Emma."

Catharine asked permission to accompany them; and obtained on condition that she would sit on the bottom, or side of the carriage.

———

"Mamma, I want to put on a clean frock this morning;" said Attelia Lang; "for just see how Carlo dirtied this one with his feet, and you know you promised me that I should carry this bunch of flowers to Emma, this morning, when I went to school. See if they ain't pretty, mamma. I got this sprig of chamomile, because its sentiment is so good for Emma. 'Tis 'bloom in sorrow, energy to act in adversity,' you know. This mignonette is 'moral and intellectual beauty:' and see! I have got a poppy. One don't like a poppy very well, unless they know its language. Emma does, for she taught it to me. It is 'Consolation. Let the darkness of the past be forgotten in the light of hope.' The roses, pinks, petunias, and columbines, are all beautiful in sentiment and everything. "How glad Emma will be—she is so fond of flowers."

"Ma, please let me go early this morning," said Frank Pierce. "I want to carry this piece of school to Emma. I remember we looked, but couldn't find any before she went away."

"And, ma, let me tarry my doll to her. I'll div it to her if I may," said little Margaret.

"I say, mother, I want my shoes and stockings on this morning before I go to school. All the boys and girls are going to see Emma Hale, and I want to show her this half-dollar that uncle Joe give me," shouted a sturdy little fellow, whom his mother and everybody else called Sam.

"I shan't stop," said his mother, who was pouring her second pot of cream into a mammoth churn. "It is Friday, and I have got to churn, iron, and bake to day, and lots of mending to do. 'Twill take me all day to-morrow to do my business. I wish the factories were all burnt down, then Susa would be obliged to stay at home and help me. John, let them peas alone; you are scattering them all over the floor."

"You told me to shell them, I guess,"

"I don't care if I did. I tell you now to let them alone. Here, Mary, take the broom and sweep. I should be ashamed enough if anybody was to call."

"I don't blame Susa for going to the factory, you scold so. I'd go if I was a girl," said John.

Mrs. Hanson caught her rod, but John evaded its application by leaping from the house.

A pale, sickly-looking girl came up from the cellar with a large pan full of milk. She set it down with others, and then herself in a chair almost breathless with fatigue.

"Mother, I wouldn't keep so many cows, and be obliged to work so hard," said she. "Poor father killed himself working so hard on the land, and we shall kill ourselves working in the house. I can't bear this pain in my sides much longer.

"Why, child, what can we do? We only make a living now. I must make butter and cheese to sell, to buy my necessaries with. You must have a new cloak next fall, and I am sure I must have a winter dress. Then there must be a web of sheeting and a new *set*, if I can possibly get it, with the cloth we sell; and"——

"But, mother, let Mary and I go to the factory with Susan. She says she can get good places for us there, where we shall not be obliged to work so hard, and where we can make more. Then you can make less butter, cheese and cloth. You will have a small family and can sell produce. And, mother, I *must* have time and money to go to school. I cannot grow up so ignorant."

She rose in her earnestness, and stood close by her mother's side, with her tearful eyes fixed on her face.

"Hannah, how much you *do* look like your father! Well, I don't know about it—I'll think of it, and perhaps—I guess—your father did kill himself with hard work, I think, and you look terrible pale this morning, Hannah. I guess we will plan it some way so that we can all have an easier time of it. Here, Sam, you may come and put your shoes on, if you want to call at 'Squire Marshall's. You ask Mrs. Marshall if she will lend me her largest cheese hoop. Mine gave out yesterday. Mary, set down your broom a minute, and run to the cow-house and get some rennet for this cheese, and you may get some tansy too."

"I must call and see Emma this morning, much as we have to do," said the kind and busy Mrs. Curtis. "Sarah Pierce says she looks more like her mother than ever, now she is out of health. Little did her mother think what the poor child had got to endure! I shall always love her for her mother's sake, if for nothing else."

So Emma's room was thronged from the time the pupils came *en masse*, till the doctor drove up to the door to carry her out.

To render his equipage as *unique* as possible, the doctor put his farm harness upon his horses, and filled the back part of his cart with scythes, rakes, and other implements of haying and reaping. Had any one accused the worthy gentlemen of vanity in this, he would have repelled the charge most certainly. But was he not vain? He was a man of sound learning and judgment, of wealth and benevolence of heart. By these his reputation was established. He had no need of fine clothes, polite bows, smart speeches, or splendid equipage, to secure for him respect and patronage. Of this he was proudly conscious; so he went with a hole in his coat sleeve, and in the summer, in tow pants. He wore a slouched palm-leaf hat, or a tarpaulin, sheep-skin slippers, or cowhide boots, just as the weather required, or the impulse seized him. He took his family to ride in a buggy or cart. It was immaterial to him, he said, but it was very evident that he liked his cart-rides best. He was just one of that sort of men which draws from a Marryatt something like this:

"In the village of ——, one of the pleasantest and most enlightened in New England, the gentlemen take their daughters, and their daughters' visiters to the field to mow, or rake hay, as the case may be; to the barn to husk corn, or look at the pigs, and carry them to ride in horse-carts. This is practiced not only among the lower classes and mediocrists, but among the *elite* of the village—the professionals."

The doctor's motives in the present instance, were a kind desire to amuse Emma and his passion for oddity; his purpose was to ap-

pear as ludicrous as possible. He was partially defeated in the latter.

While he was examining Mr. Marshall's grapes, and Emma exchanging civilities with some young friends who had just come up to the door, Catharine beckoned to two or three others as wild as herself, and they ran to the yard. They returned in a few minutes with branches of elm, spruce, larch, asparagus, and rose, and with these hung the whole exterior of the cart, the farming implements, and much of the harness.

"There are your uncle, aunt, and cousin coming, Emma," said the doctor, extending his hand to assist her in mounting.

How wildly did Emma's heart beat! There was the brother of her sainted father, and she had been told that he strongly resembled her father in form and feature. She longed to fly to his arms; but her heart sickened at recollections of his injustice to her, and with a deep sigh she answered the "good morning" of her light-hearted friends.

Eveline was leaning on the arm of a tall, noble looking young man, a stranger. The doctor bowed coldly to the party, when they met, but his salutation was unnoticed, except by the stranger, for their eyes were riveted on Emma's face.

"That is their son, I suppose; I heard that they expected him last evening," said the doctor.

"Emma, how much he looks like you! Did you look at him? Was that what made him blush so finely? or, think you, it was that he might look just as pretty as he could any way? Why, how pale you are! Are you faint, dear Emma?"

"Not much; but I hope I shall not meet them again while I am at Boscawen."

"You must, unavoidably, meet them often," said the doctor. "You must nerve yourself for this, at first. Let there be no shrinking, Emma, and you will soon learn to meet them with indifference."

CHAPTER XV.

"So that is the beauty of Boscawen!" said Eveline, with a sneer.

"Which one? the lady in black: can this be—can this be Esq. Marshall's visiter?" inquired Mr. Hale.

"Yes, I suppose so. Did you think her pretty, Henry?"

"Yes, very beautiful; but how pale! Who was that healthy, happy looking creature at her feet? She is beautiful."

"She is Esq. Marshall's daughter—one of the greatest hoydens in Christendom. For my part, I have no patience with those fiery red complexions; they make their owners look so much like 'buxom, bonnie, sousie" Irish lasses."

"Then I think her companion's may suit you. She looks sufficiently delicate, certainly."

"And I suppose she set you to thinking about lilies, bridal roses, and all such romantic things. But she looks effeminate to me; don't she to you, mother?"

"Yes, extremely so; I have no patience."

"And there was such an unpardonable display of affectation of delicacy in the way she mounted the cart—for it was a literal cart, brother—and she reclined on her seat so languishingly! 'Twas just as if she had been queen of the United States on a golden throne, Oh dear, father! I do wish you would sell or give this farm away, and move somewhere—to the west, or anywhere, I don't care where."

"You forget Edward Marshall, my dear Eva," said her mother. "You know he finishes his studies in just three months; then you know——"

"Yes; and I suppose Emma knew, too, and so managed to grow ill at this time."

Henry started at the name of Emma: "Emma! what Emma? This pale girl was not our cousin, was she?"

"Well, I suppose it was the very identical Emma Hale, 'and no mistake,' as folks here say. But what if it was? What excites you so, Henry?"

"Why then did you write me—why did you tell me last evening that you knew nothing about my cousin? that she went off somewhere, you knew nothing about where? Oh, father, mother, Eveline, how could you deceive me so?"

"La! do you think we are going to spend our time and thoughts in writing and talking about a Lowell factory girl?" exclaimed Eveline.

Her parents were glad that her ready reply precluded the necessity of answering on their part. They both averted their faces to avoid the reproving, sorrowful looks of their son.

A conviction of the whole truth rushed upon Henry at once. His cousin had been driven from her home to toil in a factory; and her health, it might be, her life, would fall a sacrifice. The thought of this, and of the deception of his family, nearly overpowered him.

As soon as Henry amassed a sufficient sum, he wrote to his family to ascertain the situation of his cousin, that he might transmit funds to her. He wrote repeatedly, and the answer invariably came, that they knew nothing about her. Week after week, and month after month passed away without any intelligence; and he still toiled on, and Emma was still the polar star of all his exertions. He at length determined on going to Boscawen, as soon as he gained a sufficient sum to defray the expenses of his journey, and provide for his cousin. To this end, he redoubled his exertions. He made several investments with his employers, which proved exceedingly lucky, and when he left New Orleans for Boscawen, he took with him a pretty little fortune.

The simultaneous arrival of Henry and Emma, gave the Hales no little uneasiness. After a mutual consultation, they resolved to prevent an interview between them, and all knowledge, on Henry's part, of her being at Boscawen, by leaving town immediately, under pretence of visiting friends in different parts of Vermont. The next day was fixed upon for their departure. Henry suspected some sinister design in this, and determining to ascertain Emma's residence, he took his hat for the purpose of walking out, that he might find some one who could satisfy him. His family seemed to suspect his designs; and, although they had just instructed the maid not to admit visiters, if any came, on account of their hurry of preparation, they proposed accompanying him. As we have already seen, Eveline defeated their purpose. They had discussed Emma very freely in his presence, but it was as "that lady," or "Esq. Marshall's visiter."

Henry remonstrated against leaving home so soon, to no purpose. Every arrangement had been made to this end.

"And so you must defer paying your civilities to the factory girl until after our return," said Eveline, with a bitter laugh.

Henry turned away in undisguised contempt, and left the room.

"You had better follow him, Mr. Hale," said his wife. "He seems bewitched about this girl, and will manage to see her after her return from her ride, if possible, I am convinced."

"Yes, father, take him to posting books that are already posted, to looking over old accounts, or any such a thing."

"Take him all over the farm, explain all improvements, made and planned, and ask his advice about them, if you do not want it," said Mrs. Hale.

"He won't be *compelled* to give up his whims," replied Mr. Hale. "So we can only turn him from them, by holding up some other rattle. I will take him to my study now. After dinner, you must amuse him two or three hours with your plants, paintings, drawing and music, Eveline. Then I will manage him, till 'tis too late to make a call. We will be ready for an early start to-morow."

It was night, and Henry had been held in "durance vile" all day.

"Now, Henry, Eveline will amuse you in the sitting room, while I go out to give my men some instructions."

"No, sir," said Henry, turning from a window where he had been standing some minutes in silence; "I want a solitary walk."

"Eveline will be glad to accompany you."

"No, sir, it is not necessary. I prefer being alone," answered Henry, as he left the room.

He walked toward Esq. Marshall's, as Mr. Hale saw. He gave Eveline a hint; she caught her bonnet and followed him.

"Ha, Henry!" she exclaimed, as she came up with him and took his arm. She laughed at his evident vexation. "And so, my Quixote, you were for stealing a march on us, and when I had been waiting impatiently, an hour for father to release you, that I might have a *compagnon* in a ramble. Don't your conscience condemn you?"

Her sickly attempt at playfulness was lost upon her brother. He saw through it all, and would have shaken her from him in utter disgust, but that she was his sister. He felt a pity for her, and a sorrow for her frailties, which ensured for her that forbearance to which her worth gave her no claims. He sighed heavily, and walked on in silence, until they reached Esq. Marshall's.

"Some one is sick here," said Eveline. "Dr. Pierce is at the window, and Dr. Chamberlain's carriage is at the door."

Henry thought of Emma, of her pale, deathly countenance, and a faintness seized him, which nearly overcame him.

"There is Mrs. Smith coming out. I'll ask her about it," continued Eveline. "Mrs. Smith, who is sick at Esq. Marshall's?"

"The poor, dear Emma. The factory has killed her. Oh, if you could see her as she lays there, as beautiful as an angel, but as pale, cold, and still almost as death, your very heart would ache for her. Her room is full of neighbors; they are weeping and walking about; poor Catharine is hanging over her, and crying as if her heart would break; the doctors are bathing her temples with ether, and letting blood; but she knows nothing about it."

Mrs. Smith's own emotions prevented her observing Henry's until his sister spoke.

"Why, Henry, how you shake! Are you sick?" said she. Henry could not answer.

"You are very pale, sir. Here is my house; will you walk in?" said Mrs. Smith.

He could only bow an assent. He entered—threw himself on a seat, exhausted by his emotions. Eveline was excessively frightened.

"What is the matter, Henry? Are you sick, too? Oh, I wish father and mother were here. Let us go home now: can't you walk, Henry? Mrs. Smith, what is the matter with Emma?"

"She has a fit, a terrible one, of some kind, I suppose. She was taken very suddenly about an hour ago. The doctors don't tell what they think of her; but we all know what to infer from their looks and manner. There will be a happy, happy meeting in heaven this night; but, oh, how we should feel! to see her die so—'tis dreadful. Poor, poor girl! she looks just as her mother did the hour that she died. You will excuse me, I must go back."

Henry started up.

"I shall accompany you, madam."

"No, no, Henry! go home with me, first," said Eveline, clinging to him. "I can't go alone. Oh! I wish I had not come."

"First call with me to see our cousin. I shall stop but a few moments."

"I am glad you are going to call, sir," said Mrs. Smith, as they crossed the street. "Every body will think the better of you for it. I was in to Mr. Marshall's this afternoon, sir; and some one who was in at the same time mentioned you, Mr. Hale, supposing that you too had wronged her. Her eyes filled with tears, and she told them you were kind and good as a brother to her, and that she respected and loved you as a brother."

When they entered the sick room, those who were standing near the bed-side, with the exception of Dr. Pierce and Catharine, moved back, to give the cousins an opportunity to approach. As Mrs. Smith said, she did lay there, "as beautiful as an angel, but as pale, cold, and still as death." How harrowing to Henry was the conviction that that was the work of his father! It was too much for his sensitive nature. A convulsive shudder ran through his frame, the color left his face, a faintness came over him, and he would have fallen had he not been supported to the sofa.

"Poor young man!" said Dr. Pierce to Mr. Marshall. "He feels as I should feel in his place, and I respect and love him for it."

He was relieved, at last, by a flood of tears.

Eveline was distressed, partly in remorse and partly in apprehension of something dreadful, she scarcely knew what. She clung to Henry, and as soon as he was sufficiently composed, begged him to accompany her home.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mr. and Mrs. Hale were shocked when they heard the situation of Emma. Their consciences, in a voice that all their efforts to that effect could not stifle, accused them of being accessary to her sufferings, and most willingly would Mr. Hale have exchanged his present affluence for beggary, even if he might thereby secure the peace of conscious integrity.

"I can't sleep," said he, starting up before it was yet light. "I can no more sleep, than if my pillow were of thorns."

"You have been groaning and talking of horrible things in your sleep," said Eveline, crying; "and Henry walking his floor all night, I believe."

"I slept a few moments, at intervals, just long enough to dream of my brother, or of Emma's dying before me, accusing me of injustice. I am going out to find some one of whom I can inquire about her."

"Oh, father! do wait until it is a little lighter. The lamp burns so dim, and it is so gloomy here! Henry has gone, I suppose. I heard him go out a short time since."

Eveline was too nervous and timid to rest in her own apartment, after what she had seen and felt, and accordingly a sofa was placed in her mother's room for her.

"Oh, mother! if Emma does die now, I never can forgive myself, for what I have said and done," said Eveline, after her father left the room.

"Don't talk about that, child; 'tis of no use."

"It would be of some use to me, if I could hear her say that she forgives us all. I have thought about her all night; and if you could have seen her as I saw her, so mild, innocent, and death-like, you would feel as I do. I care nothing about Edward Marshall, this place, fine clothes, or anything. If I can see her well, 'tis all I ask. Mrs Smith said, 'The factory has killed her.' Oh, how this has rung in my ears!"

"La, you are only nervous. For my part, I shall think nothing about her, and care less."

"This is pretty much what I said to Henry when we were coming home last night. 'Sister,' said he, 'be careful what feelings you cherish toward one who has never injured you: one whose pure spirit will soon pass to the Father of the fatherless, and whose body will lie there.' He looked up to Heaven, and then pointed to the cemetery as he spoke, and his voice was so solemn, it seemed to come from another world."

Mrs. Hale was not unaffected, but she determined on struggling sturdily against emotions so new and *annoying*. What was Emma to her? A niece, 'twas true, but a stranger; and one who had no claims upon her on any ground. What if she had slandered her? 'Twas nothing more than she did by others, and others by her; and all would die some day. How callous does the heart become under a long indulgence of selfishness! How difficult to recall benevolent feelings which have been banished from it for years!

Mr. Hale found no lulling influences in objects around him. There was the common where he and his brother had played in boyhood, and where his brother had so many times warded off the chastisement, he would otherwise have incurred from his companions, by his ill-natured wrongs. There, beneath the old elm, was the seat where they had sat, and where he had so often been assisted by his brother in construing the long and difficult lesson which, in his love of play, or idleness, had been neglected; and here the mound under which that brother lay in death! He felt as if his spirit were hovering about the place, a witness to his guilt, and Emma's consequent afflictions. He endeavored to shake off their impressions as the effects of excitement and loss of sleep; but still they clung to him.

When he reached Mr. Marshall's, he had seen no one of whom he could inquire with regard to Emma. Mr. Marshall was in the yard, leaning against a tree with his arms folded upon his bosom. He looked thoughtful and sad. He did not observe Mr. Hale, and he made several attempts to inquire, but dread of hearing the answer deterred him.

"How—how is your family, this morning, Esq. Marshall?" said he, at last.

"All well, sir, but Emma. She has been in a deep and quiet sleep near two hours. From this we expect important results, but cannot tell what they may be."

"Can I see her?"

"Your son has been there an hour. Yes, sir, you may walk in."

Emma still slept. Catharine stood at her head; Henry was at her side, holding a hand that rested on the bed-clothes. The noise made by the entrance of Mr. Marshall and her uncle, awoke her. The curtains concealed them from her; but she looked at her cousin, and then at Catharine. Catharine saw that there was a great change; she hoped a favorable one, until she recollected how intervals of strength and consciousness often occur immediately before death. Emma extended her other hand to her.

"My cousin—dear Catharine, what has happened?"

"You have been very ill a few hours, my sweet Emma; but we hope you are better now," said Catharine, tenderly kissing her cheek, on which a tear fell.

Henry did not speak, but he pressed her hand in both his. He felt that she was to be spared to him; but the transition from despair to the most lively hope, was so sudden that he felt as if under the influence of a happy illusion, and he scarcely dared breathe lest it might be broken. A smile of perfect peace settled upon the face of Emma, as her eyes rested alternately on Henry and Catharine. She still retained their hands, her eyes closed, and she was again in a calm sleep.

Catharine was alarmed, and beckoned her father to the bedside. Mr. Hale followed, and not the wealth of the Indies could have atoned to the unhappy man for what he suffered in one half hour, as he stood there and gazed upon his neice. She opened her eyes again, and they fell upon her uncle. He instantly retreated, but not until he was recognized. She burst into a flood of tears, and it seemed to Catharine and Henry that the emotions which shook her fragile frame, must destroy her. The doctor entered at this moment. He looked at Emma, around the room, and comprehended all at a glance.

"This will never do," exclaimed he. "Emma must be kept perfectly calm. Emma, how do you do this morning, my dear?" he continued, as he walked up to her and took her hand. "Oh, you are better, vastly better; but, my child, you must be careful. Your uncle and cousin must leave you, and in a few days you shall return their call."

Mr. Hale was leaving the room. He turned to look at his niece, and her eyes were fixed on him with such an expression of mournful tenderness, that he could not resist the impulse which took him to her side. She extended her hand to him. He pressed it in silence, and then hurried from the room, followed by Mr. Marshall and Henry.

But 'tis the lights and shadows of *factory* life we are to delineate. Hence we may not linger long with Emma in her new sphere.

CHAPTER XVII.

"How everything works for good to us, and how happy we all are since we—since Emma recovered!" said Eveline to her brother, as she threw off her bonnet, after a twilight ramble with Emma, Edward, Catharine, and other young friends.

Three months had passed away since the events recorded in the preceding chapter, and great changes have been wrought in the little

community at Boscawen. Emma's health was rapidly and perfectly restored. Edward had returned from Cambridge, "with his blushing honors thick upon him," and had commenced his professional duties in partnership with the good old Esq. Blake, one of the best scholars and most talented attorney in the county. But he was now old, and he had for years been waiting for a young and vigorous assistant in the person of his favorite, Edward Marshall.

A beautiful English cottage was coming up on the pleasantest part of Mr. Marshall's farm; and all knew that this was for Edward and Emma.

"I never was so glad for anybody in my life, as I am for Emma," said Mrs Smith to a little party gathered in her parlor. "She will be as happy as mortals can be; for she and Edward have always loved each other."

"Yes; and all the Esquire's folks are delighted; and, you—" here the speaker lowered her voice—"they say Catharine is engaged to Henry. He has bought Ladd and Freeman out, you know, and 'tis supposed he and Edward will be married at the same time."

"I could tell something that would prove this, if I pleased," said a third speaker. "My husband has taken a job, and 'tis to build a house just like Edward's, just opposite, in Mr. Hale's field. You may guess what 'tis for; but, remember, I did not tell you."

"I should think Mr. Hale's folks would feel as if Providence was rewarding them for their giving up Emma's property to her, now they have got nearly all they thought lost.

"I should think so too. How much better Mrs. Hale appears since they got their property back; she was so ill-natured and passionate before. Now she lives in good style, and has everything she wants, sees a great deal of company, and this is just the kind of excitement she wants to keep her in humor."

"I have been thinking about that. I fear the poor woman knows little or nothing of the happiness religion gives; and so she is entirely dependent for her pleasures upon the things of this world, It is a pity her unhappiness, under her supposed misfortunes, did not lead her to choose the better part, which can never be taken from her. She will need this if she is rich. She cannot always live and enjoy health, nor can her husband and children. And what can one do when they lose their best and dearest friends, without the comforts of religion?"

"They find little pleasure in the things of the world, Mrs. Smith, at such times. Eveline appears to be really an altered girl since she has become so intimate with Emma."

"And I rather think her brother's partner has something to do with this; you know he is very pious. I saw them walking hand in hand in the garden last evening, with Edward and Emma, Henry and Catharine. It is my opinion they will all be married at the same time."

And a fulfilment of these predictions has been wrought out. Emma, to use the language of Mrs. Smith, is "as happy as mortals can be."

"Come to me, dearest friend," she wrote to Alice; "I long to show you my husband and my home. I do believe you will agree with me in this, that they are both all perfection.

"I dare not trust myself to be so happy. It seems too much for one long to enjoy in this world; and I often find myself dreading that something may happen to Edward—that he may be ill, or taken from me by death. There is a world of suffering in the thought; how then could I bear the reality? I pray my heavenly Father that I may need no more chastisements from his hand—that I make no more idols only to 'find them clay.'

"You ask me to describe Edward. You know my partiality, and will not trust my portraiture, I fear. He is tall, and exquisitely genteel in form, and graceful in deportment, His forehead is the prettiest I ever saw—so fair, high, and full. His eyes—you must see them to understand how they can be so beautiful. I don't know, myself, what it is. Their color certainly is not uncommonly pretty; but their expression is altogether different from any other eyes I ever saw. It goes to my heart with a thrill of delight that sometimes becomes pain. His love and tenderness to me I will not describe. He is always doing or saying something to make me as happy as I can be, and live. I am sometimes so affected by his kindness that I weep. He is coming now. He sees me, and quickens his step. I am just like a child; I always want to meet him in the yard, or at the door. Let me run.

"There, dear Alice, Edward is gone. I met him in the hall; he caught me in his arms, and kissed me as if we had been parted days instead of a few hours.

"He sends his warmest regards to you, and joins his entreaties with mine that he may have an early and a long visit from you. Do, dear Alice, come next week, and spend the remainder of the season with us.

"Remember me most affectionately to Mrs. Wells, Dorcas, Mr. Adams, and others. I shall write to Mrs. W. and Dorcas next week. Till then, I am, as ever, theirs and yours.

"EMMA MARSHALL."

A reply came from Alice, announcing that in one month she would be married to Mr. Adams:—

"I shall be married at my sister's; and it is decided that we stop at Boscawen on our return, and spend a few days with you. How happy we shall be, dear Emma! We ought to be the most grateful of human beings; for our fondest hopes, our brightest dreams, will be even more than realized.

"We are to reside at Lowell, at present, in the superintendent's house. Mr. Curtis has retired to his farm, in Springfield; and Mr. Adams has been promoted to his place.

"I have something to tell you of our friend Dorcas that will please you; not because marriage is so pleasant, abstractedly considered, but because 'tis so melancholy to be an orphan, destitute of home and home friends, as you and I have been, and as Dorcas is now. She went to her native town a few weeks since, to visit a distant relative, and some old acquaintances there. Soon after her return, she received a letter with an offer of marriage from a gentleman there—a very worthy man, 'tis said—and she has accepted. He is a farmer; and he will find in our friend a kind and faithful helpmeet. She is constantly improving in meral and intellectual graces; and is as devoted as ever in her attachment to you and others. She sends much love to you, and will write to you soon."

"Don't you think, Emma," said Catharine, as she seated herself beside Emma to rest after a stroll, "don't you think I am getting metamorphosed into a sober, dignified matron, 'with musing eye and even gait,' I am so very grave?"

"I think there is a great and a happy alteration in you, my dear Catharine, since your engagement—especially since your marriage."

"I don't feel at all as I used to. I am happier than I ever was before—but so quiet and calm always. I don't know whether to impute this to my responsibilities as a wife and the mistress of a family, or to the example of Henry. Eveline says, he and I have been exchanging habits, in part. She says Henry is as much more cheerful than he used to be, as I am more serious than formerly. Be this as it may, the change on my part is a fortunate one; for Henry, all stately as he is, would be frightened to see me romp as I did one short year ago. He would love me just as well, he is so good and kind. But he could not be so well satisfied with my character."

Emma did not forget those friends who had been so kind to her in her adversity. She visited Mrs. Wells; and left valuable presents in clothing and books, for herself and her children. She spent two days with Dorcas, on her way to the White Hills; and found her the happy wife of an intelligent, happy farmer. Her intercourse—personal and epistolary—with Alice, continues to the present time.

We will now leave Emma. We do not know what *lights* may hereafter play about her pathway, or what *shadows* may darken it; but we hope, that, in all situations, she will be sustained by the same trust in Heaven, which soothed her darkest hour; and that she will ever be led by the same principles which have hitherto directed her.

HELEN GOULD.

CHAPTER I.

"WHAT could we do, when the loved hand that has cherished us from infancy, relaxes its grasp on ours, and stiffens in death—when the eye that has ever followed us in watchfulness, closes to its long sleep, and the heart that loved us better than self, is fluttering to its last rest—what could we do then, if we might not turn to Heaven?" said Helen Gould, as she took the offered arm of her cousin Maria. "At such an hour, the heart turns loathingly from merely worldly pleasures and casts itself at the feet of Jesus."

"And not in vain, my dear cousin, for it finds rest there;" answered Maria.

At the urgent and reiterated request of her cousin, Helen had at last consented to leave her mother's corpse, where she had long been kneeling, and walk with her in the garden. When she left the house, she felt a degree of strength and resignation which surprised her, often as she had tested "the worth of prayer."

But they vanished as soon as she entered the garden. There was the summer house, where, in childhood, she had thrown herself on the green turf at her mother's feet, after a wild chase of a buterfly, or frisk about the garden shrubbery with her kitten; and where her mother had "kissed her finger to make it well," when it had been injured by the saucy thorns of her rose-tree. There, in the bright morning hours of maturer years, they had sat when the perfume of a thousand flowers filled the air, and the songs of a thousand birds floated on the ear. The one was no more joyous than the boundings of Helen's spirits, and the other no sweeter than her dreams. And when the time came that affliction threw her dark mantle about them, her heart never beat so lightly beneath its heavy folds, as when she had

"Spent the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer,"

in this little retreat, beside her mother.

All around her were the flowers her mother had planted. Now she was laid low, pressed down by the cold hand of death; and, oh, how Helen longed, in the wildness of her grief, to pillow her aching head with hers, to that sleep which knows no waking! "My God, have mercy! oh, have mercy!" she exclaimed, as she flung herself on her knees, and buried her face in her hands. She wept there long, and as violently as a child. Maria sat down on the seat where she knelt; she laid her hand tenderly on her head; but she could not "whisper peace, peace," for she saw, and felt in her heart, that, "there was no peace" for the stricken girl.

Esquire Gould, the father of Helen, began his public career under the most auspicious circumstances that fall to the lot of mortals.

Wealthy, learned and talented, beloved by all for his sweetness of disposition, he felt that he needed only the love of the beautiful and gifted Helen Bryant, to make him the happiest of men. He won this easily for himself; and on one of the loveliest evenings in June of 1816, he led her to her new home, the stateliest in the town of L.

Here, happy in the society of the accomplished, the good and the gay, among whom she moved the brightest; in the affection of the afflicted, to whom she was an angel of mercy; and thrice happy in the love of her husband and little daughter, Mrs. Gould passed the first twelve years of her wedded life. Then came a cruel reverse Intemperance, that deadliest of monsters, which so loves to lurk in beds of fairest flowers, thence to spring upon its unwary, helpless, victim, came upon Esquire Gould, gathered its "snaky folds" fast about him, and with its poisoned fangs tainted his whole being.

Extraordinary excitement attending the election of 1828, and his consequent disappointment in his expectations of promotion, were, chiefly, "the moving why" of his downfall. It was not so rapid as to startle by its impetuosity; but fearfully sure and steady. Some remonstrated, others scorned, and yet others pitied; his sensitive and self-accusing spirit shrank alike from them all.

It was long before Mrs. Gould suspected the cause of the change she saw in him. His hand became unsteady, his eye dull, and his cheek pale and flushed by turns. She trembled for his health; and with his hand clasped fondly in her own, and her tearful eyes raised pleadingly to his face, she begged him to suspend his official labors, and spare himself for her sake. At such moments, although he inwardly cursed himself for the woe he was bringing upon the loving creature at his side, he often replied to her anxious pleadings, in petulence and anger; then tore himself from her, and in another and deeper cup he sought the Lethean draught which might wash out his memories of the past, and prevent those forebodings of the future wretchedness which almost crushed him beneath their weight. Wretched, deluded man! to rush upon the very spear which he felt had already "pierced his heart," and left its wound to fester and rankle there!

Years passed by; and, meanwhile, Esquire Gould had been descending in point of wealth, talent and influence. Still he was above mediocrity in them all; for he was, almost invariably, faithful in the discharge of his public duties, generous in his impulses, and gentlemanly in his general deportment. A naturally high sense of honor, induced him to shut himself up in his office, whenever he became so far intoxicated as to be unfit for business and society. There, stretched upon a sofa, his brain fevered, every nerve racked with agony, the miserable man often spent his evenings; and repaired to his house only when he was assured by the disappearance of the lights there, that his family had retired to rest.

One night, instead of retiring at her usual hour, Mrs. Gould sat long after the rest of the family had retired to their rooms. Only one light remained in the sitting-room; and this was burning near an open window. Mrs. Gould put back the curtain to listen for the footsteps of her husband; the air rushing in, extinguished her light; but still she sat there. The gloom of the apartment, and the deep silence of night suited her state of feeling. Regrets for the past, and dark fears for the future, filled her heart almost to bursting; and she even wished that the burden which seemed destroying her, might do its work at once.

At last her husband came. His step, as he crossed the hall, was heavy and unsteady. At once, suspicions of the truth flashed upon her; and, breathless with suspense and dread, she sat until he entered. The light of the hall lamp, which he carried, fell on his haggard face as he reeled into the room, Mrs. Gould's worst fears were more than realized—her husband was a drunkard!

She half rose, clasped her hand wildly to her forehead; and, uttering a suppressed shriek, she fell upon the sofa nearly senseless. Had this terrible conviction of her husband's guilt come upon her at any other time, or in any other manner, she might have summoned her piety and her natural fortitude to her aid; but, as it was, it gave her whose system, physical and mental, such a shock as she never afterward recovered.

She went about her duties ever after like one in a sad dream, from which there was no hope or desire of awaking. Having no expectations of happiness for herself, she lived only for others.

In the career of Esquire Gould, this discovery of his wife formed a sad epoch. His downward progress was fearfully accelerated by it; and in less than two years he fell a victim to his own vice, Mrs. Gould to the heart-breaking sorrows of a drunkard's wife.

At this period our story opens. Every benevolent heart bled for poor Helen. With all her father's faults she "loved him still," but her mother had been the very sun of her existence, and she was lost to her for ever.

The estate was immense; but the result of a superficial investigation by the administration, left no hope that a farthing would fall to the orphan after a liquidation of the debts.

A sad reverse awaited Helen, and of this she was fully conscious. She had not been nurtured in idleness; but of experimental self-dependence she knew no more than a child, and she shrank with dismay from the struggles before her. There were none to whose kind offices the ties of consanguinity gave her any claim, except the father of Maria.

He was agent of a small manufacturing establishment in the pleasant village of Amoskeag in New Hampshire. Thither it was decided that Helen should accompany her cousin on her return.

Day after day she deferred her preparations. There was a melancholy satisfaction from which she could not wean herself, in visiting those spots in the house, yard and garden, rendered peculiarly dear by their associations with her mother's memory. She felt as if her heart was breaking, yet she lingered about them. She laid her head on the pillow on which her mother had breathed her last. She sat hours as pale and motionless, nearly, as a statue, in her easy chair, with the Bible she had so often wet with her tears, clasped in her hands. She hung her portrait opposite her bed; and it was the last object on which her eyes rested at night, and the first to which they turned in the morning.

But in no place did she seem so in the immediate presence of her mother, as when surrounded by the flowers which her hands had planted, watered and trained. Her spirit seemed hovering about her there, filling the air with fragrance, and giving to her flowers an unearthly sweetness and beauty.

But the time came when she must leave all these, for she felt that she could not witness their sale and transfer to the possession of another. The carriage containing her wardrobe, her house plants, the family portraits and valued relics, had already gone; that which was to convey her and Maria was at the gate. Her kind and sympathizing neighbors, to whom she had endeared herself by her gentleness and intelligence, flocked around her, and mingled their tears and sobs with hers.

It seemed to Helen that all the suffering she had ever endured was concentrated in that last hour; and when she rose for the purpose of leaving the house, she was utterly unable to stand, and sinking back on the sofa, she again gave herself up to her emotions.

The attentions of her friends, although perfectly sincere and well-meant, only added to her distress. Between Jane Clement and Helen there had existed a close intimacy from childhood. Jane flung her arms around her neck, and, in a voice scarcely audible from emotion, declared that she knew she never could be happy again. The widow Smith, who had been fed, clothed, and nursed in sickness by Helen and her mother, said in a whisper to old Mrs. Lane, "I thought I must look upon her dear face once more, and I longed to come into this house again while it was the home of a Gould."

Her auditor groaned, "I have seen changes, and felt them too," said she; "but never anything like this. I could have borne it myself, my course is so nearly finished; but to see that poor child——" The old lady stopped, overcome by her feelings. Maria made several attempts to speak, to draw Helen away from this painful scene, but her emotions choked her. At last Mr. Clement, the good clergyman of L. laid his hand tenderly on Helen's head.

"My dear girl," said he, "remember that "the Father of the fatherless" is now peculiarly your friend and guide. He will be with you and bless you; and he is better than a thousand earthly protectors. We will part now, but it is only for a little while. Next autumn I will take Jane to visit you; and we will bring you to L. to spend the winter with us."

He offered his arm and led her to the carriage, followed by his son, who was to accompany them and Maria. Helen looked the good-byes she could not speak. She drew her veil over her face, and sank back into the carriage as it drove away.

CHAPTER II.

IN two months Helen entered one of the mills at Amoskeag as an operative. Her reasons, if not sufficiently obvious, may be found in the following extract from a letter to Jane Clement:

"You ask me to tell you about my uncle's family—how we pass our time, and whether I am becoming my own happy self again.

"You must know that my uncle is a very shrewd, calculating man, energetic, and full of benevolence withal. He is already wealthy; and is still rapidly accumulating property. They live in a very pretty, genteel style, yet the most perfect order and economy pervade their whole system of expenditure. This describes my aunt as a housekeeper. As a wife, mother, friend, and neighbor, she is equally faultless. In too many families the husband toils like a slave at his counter, in his office, on his farm, or at his bench; the wife is equally busy in superintending or performing household duties, while the sons and daughters are allowed to luxuriate in comparative idleness.

"In this family it is not so. Every one does his or her part in bearing the burden, and hence it rests lightly on all. They are aiming to accomplish one object which is understood and approved by the whole family; and this is, to retire next season to a large and beautiful farm that uncle has recently purchased on the Merimac, a short ride from this village.

The house is very capacious, and uncle has given rooms to each of my cousins. These they are to fit up according to their own tastes, with the fruits of their own industry. They will present a curious contrast when completed, for the tastes of the four are entirely dissimilar. Thomas you have seen at L, and you recollect that he graduated at Hanover, almost three years since. While at college, he spent several months each year in teaching. Since his graduation, he has had charge of the high school in this village; and, at the same time, has been studying theology with Dr. Howe. He is very serious, almost gloomy, in his temperament. He has chosen a room in a secluded corner of the house, which is rendered very dark by the close contact of a large elm tree. He has already purchased his pictures, his book-case, and his books. Among the former is his

own portrait. It is a dark, gloomy piece. He sits at a table, studying by the "midnight lamp," it seems from the dim and sickly light which falls on his pale face. He rests his elbow on the table, and his head on one hand, while the other lies on the page he is reading Such, his family say, has been his attitude and his occupation nearly half of every night, when in tolerable health, since his childhood His scholarship is more thorough, 'tis said, than any man's in town, except Dr. Horne's. And he was a 'bobbin boy,' so *ycleped*, from ten to sixteen, and an overseer from sixteen to eighteen, with only occasional and brief intervals of attending school. His industry and talent were such, that he kept pace with the generality of those who attended school constantly. His bookcase is a massy, dark structure, a fit tenement for the ponderous *tomes* with which it is nearly filled.

"You know all about my sweet Maria, and I scarcely need tell you that her arrangements are all simplicity and elegance. She is eighteen. Six months of each year since she was fourteen, have been spent in the mill, and the remainder of the time at school in this and the neighboring towns. She has assisted her father somewhat, in defraying her expenses; still she has sufficient left to furnish her room with every thing desirable—paintings, maps, books, minerals, shells, *et cetera*, and a harp. Her piano is destined for the sitting room. She is at present working for funds to complete her library. Her room is one of the pleasantest in the house—literally embosomed in rose trees, which throw their branches into her windows on opening them, and fill the room with fragrance.

"Henry you have never seen. His is a wild spirit Don Quixote, uncle calls him, and I agree with him that if he had lived in the days of chivalry, he would have been a knight-errant—a sort of Richard Cœur de Lion. His vivacity and daring romance are perfectly indomitable, as is evinced by the elasticity with which they repel the various *taming processes*—uncle calls them—to which he has subjected him; such as compelling him to toil in the mill when he would have been climbing mountains, and ranging forests in search of adventure; and restricting him, in his readings, to scientific and religious works, when he would have been revelling in poetry and romance. His room is a most ludicrous *ensemble*. It is on the third floor, a sort of garret; and he would not be induced to choose a better one. His portrait stands at the head of the room, dressed as a knight, and all around the walls are trophies of his victories, he commands us to consider them, in the form of antlers, stuffed skins, horns, and numerous other grotesque imitations of the *paraphernalia* of olden time. These were partly purchased, and partly obtained by himself in his trips to the Lake and White Hills. His furniture is of the most obsolete kind that could be obtained—such as was the style in the days of our great-grandparents. Where he failed in procuring originals, he has, obtained with great trouble and expense, what he humorously calls, *fac similes*.

"With that prudence and foresight which characterize all of uncle's plans, he has destined Henry to the toils of a machinist. He is very ingenious; has already drawn out some fine models of improvements, and will, doubtless, become a talented and useful man; when, if he had been permitted to follow his own inclinations, as he would have been by some equally wealthy, but less judicious father, he would have been ruined.

"Grace is thirteen—beautiful as a Hebe, innocent and sportive as a lamb. She will never be so stately as Maria; she will never love books so well; but for everything beautiful in nature, there is room in her heart. She only wants birds and flowers in her room. To procure these and provide for their accommodation, she has been working like a bee during the last six months. She has already purchased two capacious and beautiful bird-cages, an abundance of flower-pots and stands, and now she is earning money to send to Boston for canary birds, and the choicest kinds of plants.

"You will be surprised that one so young as Grace can make herself useful in such a sphere. There are many even younger than she is. They are generaly what is technically called 'spare hands.' They have no allotted task, but go about the room, helping those, who, for any reason, need their assistance.

"And, 'cousin Helen,' said Grace to me to-day, 'I would do this if I had no pay at all, but just for the pleasure of helping the girls when their work goes bad, or they are tired, or sick. I never feel so happy as I do when they look up and smile to see me coming to help them.'

"I used to pity such little creatures when I saw them pass on their way to their work. But observation has convinced me that their situation is, generally speaking, very far from being unpleasant. Their labors are not fatiguing; and if they are good girls, they are loved and petted, and kindly and judiciously advised by elder girls.

"Of myself I have somewhat to say that will startle you. I am a factory girl. I think my poverty affords a sufficient plea for this, but I fear you will not; so I will tell you how it has happened.

"You recollect in what a miserable state of feeling I wrote my last letter to you. In spite of your kind remonstrances, the advice of your father, and the entreaties of my friends here, I continued my melancholy indulgences even after I found that they were destroying my health. Oh, may God forgive me! But there were moments when I exulted in the hope that my trials would soon end in the grave. Even now, at this moment, when I think of my mother, I long to be with her. My mother—oh, my mother! How can I bear the thought, dear Jane, that I am never more to see her smile, to hear her dear voice? that I am to wander on alone, without mother, sister, brother, or home? There is desolation in it; and, when under its influence, I long to enter, at once, the home 'that hath foundations.' You do not know, my beloved friend, the reason you have for gratitude, and heaven grant that you never may learn by an experience like mine. Alas, that the heart needs such severe lessons to teach it its duty! Alas, that its blessings cannot be duly appreciated until they take their flight! And alas, that I am still so ungrateful for friends, health, returning cheerfulness, and the means of conferring happiness on others less favored than myself!

"Maria went into the mill ostensibly for the purpose of completing her library. I have since ascertained that it was a *dernier* resort of my good uncle's, in the object of drawing me occasionally from my seclusion. He did not suppose, however, that it would induce me to become an operative; and for a long time, he strenuously opposed my wishes. He could give me no reason why I should not toil as well as his daughters, and I at length overcame his opposition. And he assures me now, that he heartily approves my course, not so much from the benefit I may derive in a pecuniary point of view, as for the energy and perseverance it will be the means of fostering in my character.

"The effects that uncle foresaw were brought about. I had been so accustomed to Maria's society, that I could not endure its loss; hence I called on her every day, sometimes twice a day, until I commenced work. I became acquainted with, and attached to, many of the girls who occupied the same room, particularly a Mrs. Lawton, an interesting widow lady. I was never so happy as when I was with them, talking with them, training their plants—of which they have a great and splendid variety—and helping them.

"So it was a fondness for factory girls, and factory occupations, that led me to become an operative. And I am convinced that the same motives often lead to the same results with others. 'I speak what I do know, and testify what I have seen,' when I assert that a factory life at Amoskeag—and I have no reason to suppose that it has any peculiar features—is not one of oppression and bondage. The operatives feel no sympathy, whatever, with those who talk, write, and lecture upon their privations and their slavery. They are a happy and an independent class. They are confined, 'tis true; but this restriction is self-assumed, and can be thrown off at pleasure. But they do not wish to throw it off—and why should they? True, it is not a light thing to leave one's home and home friends; but I have heard many of them say, that the exquisite pleasure they enjoy in meeting their friends, in sitting down once more 'in the shadow of home,' and in revisiting old and loved haunts, more than counterbalances the pain of parting and absence. They cannot be excused at *any* time to spend their morning in making calls, or their afternoon in making the social visit. Nor do they wish it. They are satisfied, generally, with the good and intelligent society they find in the mills, and with the exercise that a short, brisk walk, at meal-times, on the island, in the contiguous grove, or on the falls, affords.

'Our room is a small one on the lower floor, commanding a view of the river at the falls, and far below; of bridges, islands covered with trees, and of farms and farm-houses in the distance. The window seats are on a level with the ground, and there the girls have plats of flowers, in addition to those in pots and boxes. They find ample leisure to attend to them. They talk, play, *sometimes* read a little—but 'tell it not'—and yet earn from one to three dollars per week, exclusive of board. Have they not reason to be happy?

"But, methinks you will ask if there are no shadows to this picture. Alas! there are. I do not love their delineation; yet I will bring myself to the task in my next.

"Meanwhile I am yours, as ever. HELEN GOULD."

CHAPTER III.

"Oh! I should love to go and work with Helen," exclaimed Jane, as she finished reading this letter to Ann Morey.

"Oh, so should I! What rich and beautiful dresses we might buy, earning three dollars a week!"

"What a fine library we might have! Oh, I want one that will occupy the whole north end of our sitting room. Dr. Lane's is as large as that. And I suppose I could earn such a one in a year or two."

"Did you see that silk of Mrs. Hamilton's? Oh, no; you were not at home when she was in town. It was the most magnificent thing I ever saw. Of all things, I would most like a dress like that. And, only think, Jane, I could get one in two months. I will go, I declare. I want a new bonnet, too. Father says he can't get me one this season, he has been buying so much land. I want something different from what I ever saw. I have a splendid conception of it *in* my head, and I mean it shall exist in a more tangible shape ere long. Will you go, Jane, if I will?"

I would like to go, certainly. I might fit up my room like Maria's. Father can't afford to do it, his salary is so small. Or I might dispense with some of the costliest articles, and buy a sofa and carpet for father's study, they would be so comfortable for him, and for mother, too, for that is her sitting room when I am at school, or in my room."

"Yes," answered Ann, evidently unconscious, in her own bright speculations, of what Jane had been saying. "Did you see Miss Stearns when she stopped at Dr. Stearns' on her return to Vermont from Lowell?"

"In what excellent taste she was dressed! She appeared pretty, too; and you know, Jane, that Helen Gould would not work in a factory if it wasn't perfectly genteel and respectable. I *will* go!"

"But Helen hints that there are shadows as well as lights. Indeed we have seen a dark one in the case of Harriet Chase. Do you recollect how exultingly the poor girl talked of the rich silks, rich shawls, and rich bonnets, with which she would return to L. in a year?"

Ann blushed as she answered in the affirmative.

"She brought, instead, only a few articles of finery, a ruined reputation, and ruined health."

"Oh, well, she pursued such a reckless course! She was so idle that she earned only very low wages, and these she spent as fast as earned, for trifles in dress, that do not amount to much, and for confectionary. Abby Harper says that almost every evening, warm or cold, wet or dry, she was out shopping; and she never failed to return with a paper of nuts, plums, candy, or lemons, or oranges, or some such a thing, sometimes all. She ate them the last thing before going to bed, the first thing in the morning, and at short intervals all day. Abby says that confectionary was to her, at last, what the intoxicating cup is to the drunkard; and when she became so sickly that she could not venture out in an evening storm, she hired children to go for her—no wonder, then, that she returned with ruined health. As for her reputation, Abby says she does not think that she deserves half the scandal that was heaped upon her. She says she was extremely injudicious, and careless in her deportment, at all times. She dressed very much, and was always playing off some vain freak, to draw the attention of her overseers, and of visitors. In the streets, she talked loud, laughed, ran, or jumped, just as the impulse seized her. Such open and excessive levity rendered people suspicious of the soundness of her principles; and they watched and criticised her closely, They put uncharitable constructions upon little acts, culpable only in being careless."

"Undoubtedly this was the case. I would like to hear her defended on one charge—that of visiting a shop kept by two gentlemen, notorious for their libertinism. Did Abby mention this?"

"Yes; and she says that Harriet was wronged here, although she was to blame herself first, and chiefly. She did call at this shop often when out, with one or two others, gay and vain as herself. She called at unseasonable hours. They praised her complexion; and, by way of adding to its beauty, they gave her a pink cravat. To show off her form to advantage, they gave her a mohair shawl; and, in compliment to her tiny hands—they called them—they fitted to them a pair of gloves, which they said no other lady in Lowell could wear. These she bore off, against their laughing and evidently insincere commands. She invariably showed her presents to the boarders, and laughed at the mistake she was putting upon the shopkeepers. So Abby says it is evident that her motives were none other than love of excitement and vanity, whatever they might have been had she been permitted to go on in this career. But her health began to fail in consequence of evening exposures, and intemperance in the use of confectionary. It began to be noised abroad that she was receiving presents from the Messrs. ——. None, or at least few, knew under what circumstances, but all conjectured. To give her downward progress an accelerated motion, a girl, to whom she had long been an object of envy on account of her superior beauty and attractions, informed those shopkeepers how she had amused herself with them. In the irritation of the moment, they retaliated on Harriet, by accusing her of stealing those gloves. This charge was industriously circulated by this girl and others; and at the end of the next twenty-four hours the reputation of a thief and prostitute was fastened on poor Harriet. This is Abby's version of the whole affair, and doubtless it is correct. Abby did not board with her. She did not associate with her until her misfortunes. Then she vindicated her as far as she could; took care of her while she was so sick, and restored her to her family."

"Poor Harriet! how much she must have suffered! I pity her; but as she said when father and I called to see her, yesterday, it must be regarded as a just penalty, for leaving home against the wishes of her parents, when she was so much needed there, and with the object only of buying fine clothes."

Ann again blushed.

"Perhaps so—undoubtedly," she answered. "But, Jane, was Harriet, are *you*, so superstitious as to believe that all this came upon her as a sort of judgment? If she had left home under other circumstances, and with other motives, would she not have been equally unfortunate?"

"I think, my dear Ann, that her sufferings came upon her as natural consequences of her vanity and disregard of duty. These were impulsive in leading her to the factory, and these plunged her into the course that ruined her while there. Forgetful of the duties she owed herself, her family, and her God, she squandered her time, money, and the energies of a naturally active and powerful mind, in low and degrading pursuits. She emphatically, 'sowed to the wind, and reaped the whirlwind,' as a legitimate result, a penalty—we may say, Ann, a judgment. But had her parents been poor, and had she gone there for the holy purpose of ministering to them by denying herself; or had her object been to clothe her mind with intelligence and virtue, or the accomplishment of any laudable object which we may conceive, where would have been her motives for such a course? and without an equal course of folly, how could she have been equally unfortunate? I am only echoing father in this," added Jane, smiling. "This is the view he would take of the subject."

"And it is, without question, a correct one, so I will not go to the factory until I can find a better motive than my passion for fine clothes."

"That is right, Ann; and now let us take a walk in the garden I want to go and see Helen's garden, as I still love to call it. I shall write to her immediately; and I must tell her about her dahlias, petunias, and mints."

"I would like to know who this stranger is, that is about purchasing the Gould estate. The administrator will only tell us that he is a talented, handsome young bachelor, and that he hopes to take possession in September. Mrs. Lane can only infer from his letters that he is a 'Concordite,' as his letters are mailed there. Now, how nice it would be, Jane, if the administrator had a wife, and his wife a sister! Then he would tell Mrs. Kelly, her sister would call in the aid of some half dozen, by way of keeping the secret, you know; and this half dozen would employ all L. as *subs*."

CHAPTER IV.

Two months passed by; and the changes they brought to Helen, may be found in the following extracts from letters to her friend Jane:

"And now, my dear Jane, I come to *the shadows* of my picture. You ask if there are not many cast by ignorance; if there are not many operatives who can neither write or read. That there are many cases of ignorance among so many young girls, cannot be doubted; yet I do not know one who is below mediocrity in education. Maria's observation has been extensive among them. She says there are some that came from small, retired towns in this state and in Vermont, who read and write poorly, and who have only the rudiments of the most common branches of science—arithmetic, geography, and grammar. There are some whose conversation evinces little knowledge of even these, and she presumes there may be some who have never studied them at all; yet she does not know an instance. I agree with my uncle in this, that for the ignorant and awkward, the factory is a good school. He says, some girls come here whose only associates have been their wild and daring brothers, whose only occupation—aside from attending school two or three months in the year—helping their mothers to make butter, cheese, cloth, maple sugar, puddings, and pies; perhaps assisting their fathers in planting, and in making hay; and whose only amusements, dancing to the music of the spinning-wheel, singing to the measures of the loom, swinging by the limbs of trees, roaming over hills and mountains, through fields, pastures, and woods, regardless alike of time, space, and fatigue. They have great strength, physical and mental. They have much vivacity of intellect, and native grace of manner, but these want *shape* and *direction*. Uncle says it is astonishing how much such characters will improve in one short year. The roughness of their habits of feeling and deportment is worn down by contact with the gentle and refined. The wild exuberance of their spirits is subdued, but not destroyed, by their regrets for absent and dear ones at home. They learn dependence on God, from their want of parental guidance and protection. They find other books than 'Morse's Geography,' 'Pike's Arithmetic,' 'Murray's Grammar,' old almanacs, and sermons, and acquire a new fondness for reading. Some one who has studied Natural Philosophy, tells them about the laws of gravitation, cohesion, &c., and their results in the natural world. Just this opens, as it were, a new creation before them. Clouds, dews, rains, the fall of leaves, and the flight of birds, have for them a new and thrilling interest. They are told something of the size, number, distance, and rapid movements of the heavenly bodies. They learn to trace the boundaries of the most beautiful constellations, and their imaginations instantly take fire. They walk at evening, and the stars are their companions. They sit by their windows at twilight, watch their appearance, one by one, and seem to hear the music of their march.

"And it is the same with other sciences. Maria says that with a few general principles, and illustrations of these principles, they gather inferences respecting everything around them, astonishing for their strength and correctness. Hence come a just appreciation of the beauty, wonder, and utility of all things in nature, and a higher, purer worship for 'Him who made them such.'

"Do not understand me to mean that these remarks are universal in their application. There are, doubtless, many who return home nearly as ignorant and awkward as when they came. And, in some instances, there may be a degeneracy, even. For instance, when a girl comes here from school, who has studied science after science, not from a love of study and desire for improvement, but because it is customary to attend to those branches. She leaves school with the proud idea that her education is completed. She has no motive for study, and neglects books almost entirely. Her mind is occupied by speculations upon earning money, buying and wearing fine clothes, and ultimately, getting a fine husband. She has no eyes for the pleasant sights in nature, no ears for the pleasant sounds; no thoughts for her duties as an intellectual, immortal being, no love of God, and hope of Heaven. For such a girl there are many temptations—especially in large manufacturing towns—which she may not always resist. And so your question, 'Are there not many shadows cast by vice?' must have an affirmative answer.

"There are few here, however. I have seen none. There have

been two instances of theft since my uncle came here; one of cloth from the mill, the other of money from a trunk. Both were perpetrated by young, ignorant, and very indigent girls, who were furnished, gratuitously, with funds sufficient to carry them home, and discharged.

"There have been some vicious attempts at injuring the reputation of others, by scandal. They meet, however, unsparing rebuke from my uncle and others 'in high places.' These, with the counteracting influences exerted by benevolent, influential girls, generally throw the unpleasant consequences of such attempts back upon their originators.

"Death, poverty, and disease throw their dark palls here, as elsewhere. There is one lady with whom I am acquainted, at whose tale of suffering mine has shrunk into comparative insignificance. She attracted my attention the first time I called with Maria. She was in a room where there were about a dozen young girls, and one lively, pretty creature had drawn them all into a frolic, except her. Maria and I stood in the door unperceived some time, watching them. My attention, at length, became rivetted to this lady. She walked, occasionally, all around the room, to inspect the work of her frolicsome companions, and when the girls bowed their thanks, she answered with a smile of such sadness as I never before saw. As soon as we entered, she fixed her eyes upon me with a mournful earnestness, for which I could not account, until I inquired of Maria.

"'She has heard of your misfortunes,' answered Maria. 'She has herself been recently and heavily afflicted.'

"Maria introduced her to me as Mrs. Lawton. 'This is a very pleasant day is it not?' she asked, as she looked out from the window where we were standing.

"'Yes; the air is very cool and clear; the birds are singing, and the flowers blooming on every hand in the woods where we have been walking.' My eyes filled, for I thought of my mother.

"'But, my young friend, I suppose they only remind you, as they do me, of eyes that saw them, of ears that heard them, and of hearts that loved them, which will see, hear, and feel them no more.'

"I was unutterably affected by her words and manner; and the first time for many weeks, I shed tears, which were not all for myself. She led me to speak of my trials; and wept with me, as I told her of my mother. Then she talked of Heaven—of the happiness of the departed there, and of ours, when, at last, we meet them where there will be no more sorrow, pain, and death.

"'No more *death!*' she repeated, as she turned her eyes, now lighted up by the christian's hope, to me. 'Oh, how these words thrill my heart-strings! for, to me, everything of suffering seems comprehended in that one fearful word—death! Poverty and toil, I could have borne—I did bear them; and still was happy so long as those I loved were about me.'

"She was pale, and sadly emaciated. I enquired with regard to her health, and her answer confirmed my fears.

"'A severe cough and pain in my side, are fast wearing me away.' She made a strong effort to quell emotions that almost overcame her, and continued—'I shall soon meet George and my sweet babes in Heaven; and this would give me no pangs, but for my little Margaret. 'Tis not a light affliction to be separated from her as I am now, nor is it lightly felt. But when I think of leaving her forever, it seems more than I can bear.'

"In answer to my inquiries, she informed me that she was boarding her daughter with an old friend, one mile out of the village. She visits her very often; and gladly acceded to my proposal of accompanying her in her next visit.

"I learnt from my uncle that Mrs. Lawton is the daughter of a Baptist clergyman, long since deceased. After her marriage she resided, until her husband's death, in an adjoining town. Her husband was a well-educated and very worthy farmer. He died of a lingering consumption, three month's since. For five years he was unable to labor; and, meantime, his property was all spent in support of his family. A son of four, died during his illness; and a daughter of two, was buried in the same grave.

"What are my trials, Jane, when compared with those of Mrs. Lawton? I feel that they are light; and I sometimes almost forget them in my pity for hers. One's heart instinctively bleeds for her; yet there is sunshine in her path, worth a thousand times more than the glitter of mere worldly prosperity. She would not, if she must lose this light, exchange her lot, although it be weded to toil, poverty, and disease, for all the pleasures of the worldling. Hence it appears that she is happier than thousands we call happy, even though a poor, sick, and care-worn factory operative. There is an expression of melancholy resignation, and, sometimes, of rapture, in her whole countenance, which seems unearthly in its loveliness. She is still young, and her complexion is as fair as that of infancy. It has the smoothness, the transparency, and the hectic flush which belong to the consumptive. Her manner is highly dignified and graceful, always quiet and restrained. Indeed, I do not think that her sorrows, or her expectations of an early release from them, are ever absent from her heart; and they give a blending of solemnity and christian exultation to her whole appearance, which makes her the most interesting person I ever saw, my mother excepted. She seems much more at ease since I have given her assurances that her daughter shall never want a protector while I live.

"Margaret is a sweet child. When asked who she loves best, she answers—'Mamma first, and then Helen Gould.' We visit her often. She runs to meet us with open arms, clings first to her mother, kisses her repeatedly, then rushes to me. She sometimes almost weeps. Her lip curls and her eyes fill with tears. She seems to catch this spirit from her mother. She evidently understands that she is unhappy; for she often lays her hand tenderly on her mother's cheek and says, 'poor mamma!' Alas! the poor child little knows the loss that awaits her.

"We have urged Mrs. Lawton, to no purpose, to leave the mill. She knows that nothing can stay the disease; and she believes that medicines, sedentary habits, and want of occupation, would only accelerate her death. Besides, she has no home to repair to; and no funds to support herself and Margaret. What a melancholy situation!

"Maria and I work beside her. The girls are all very kind to her. They

'Do all, and deem too little, all they can,
T' assuage the throbbings of the festered part,
And staunch the bleedings of a broken heart.'

"What a long letter this! it has occupied my leisure hours for two days, you will see. Of my other attachments and my amusements, I will inform you in my next, as you request."

CHAPTER V.

"MANY thanks to you dearest, for your favor; but in future, please spare me this raillery about Mr Graham.

"You say—'Tell me candidly, Helen, why you have ceased to mention him in your letters. Is it that he has ceased to bring you flowers, to read to you, to listen while you play the piano, and to talk poetry to you, while you ride or walk? My heart tells me that this is not the case; for no one who has once enjoyed your society, would voluntarily relinquish it; and, surely, my Helen, you would not reject the friendship of such a man as Mr. Graham must be. Tell me about this, and relieve my perplexity.'

"You have imposed a delicate task on me, my dear Jane; but its performance is due to your friendship and kind solicitude.

"Mr. Graham has not ceased to bring me flowers. My vases are filled now with beautiful ones from his garden; and a blush rose, half-blown, and of rare loveliness, lies on my table. Now I can see just the roguish smile with which you would examine it, to ascertain whether there is a bud, if you were at my side. You would find one by inspecting it closely—a little beauty, almost concealed by leaves. He gave it to me last evening, as I took his arm for a twilight ramble, with a large party. His hand trembled, I observed; but turning to answer a lively sally of my uncle's, I thought no more about it. It was a delightful evening—so still and clear, and the air so sweet! A whippoorwill sang his lay on a mound near which we passed. The 'fire-flies danced' in the dark shrubbery, the river sparkled in the moonlight; and, as if to render the scene perfectly enchanting, a band from the distant village commenced playing 'Home, sweet home!' We paused there, and stood in silence. I listened and gazed,

'Dazzled and drunk with beauty, till my heart
Reeled with its fullness.'

Mr. Graham was as silent as myself. He pressed my hand closer in his; and I felt his arm, on which I leaned, tremble. He turned to me, and I bent my eyes to my rose; then, for the first time, I saw the bud; and you may be assured that this did not lessen my agitation. He had offered me flowers many times, with regard to their sentiment, but never before a rose-bud. I started as at an electric shock, and this redoubled my confusion. Mr. Graham clasped my hand in both his, bent his head toward me, and said, 'Miss Gould—my dear Helen—' when he was interrupted by a ringing laugh from cousin Henry's lady. Oh, how it relieved me! It seemed to me that I could not bear that scene much longer. My heart beat, and my limbs trembled so that I could scarcely stand. But Mr. Graham did not appear to relish the intrusion; and as they approached us he turned into another path to avoid them.

"'Stop, *ma cousin!* please stop, Mr. Graham,' said Henry. 'Harriet proposes returning home, *en masse, hoc est, le tout ensemble!*'

"'Henry you are the most tiresome fellow I ever saw,' said Harriet, again laughing 'Positively, Miss Gould, he has done nothing but talk Latin, French, and all manner of gibberish, make stump speeches, which he called *orarsons*, or something of that sort, and quote poetry *at* me, since we left the village. Let me stay at your side, for I want somebody who is more *companionable*.'

"'*Heu, heu, me miseras!*' exclaimed cousin, with another loud laugh. '*Apropos*, Harriet, '*sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque cupido; mens aliud suadet. Video meliora, proleque; deliora sequor*,' continued he, as he walked quietly along behind Harriet.

"'Now, Mr. Henry,' said Harriet, 'I don't understand one word; but that it was sufficiently provoking, your saucy looks declare. Now hear me talk large. In the presence of Mr. Herbert Graham, and Miss Helen Gould, I positively and seriously, ay, and *awfully* declare, that I will not take your arm again to-night, Mr. Henry Gould; unless, in the presence of these witnesses, you promise to act like other folks'

"Henry dropped on one knee, took her hand, and, with mock solemnity, said—'I promise' She then took his arm, and they ran off to join a party before us.

"'That is the way Henry dealt with me, until he, at length, induced me to study French and Latin,' said Maria, who had joined us. 'And that is the way he is keeping Harriet at school, term after term, when she would prefer the work and play of the factory. She is studying ancient history and mythology this term, that she may understand

his allusions. At its close, she intends entering the mill; but instead of this, she will commence a study of the languages, I predict."

"Then came another of those measured compliments for you, Jane, from my stately cousin Thomas. He seldom hazards one of late, but when he and I are *solus*—uncle and Henry have rallied him so unmercifully about his partiality to you.

"'I think your friend, Miss Clement, excels any female I know, in classical attainments,' said he.

"'The principal of L academy divides the palm between her and our cousin Helen,' said Maria, peeping archly in his face.

"I presume I do not share the palm with you now, Jane; for, while I am adding materially to my stock of general knowledge, by a thorough, systematic course of reading, I only provide against a retrograde movement in my knowledge of the languages, by reading a page or two, every day, in Virgil and Telemachus.

"Maria, Grace, and I, have been out of the mill three weeks; but our time is very much occupied by society. My uncle's family have visiters from Connecticut, consisting of aunt's brother, his wife, one son and two daughters. They are highly intelligent and pleasing. Dr. Horne has his brother and his family from the south, with him now; and these accessaries to our society make it very interesting at this time.

"Dr. Horne's society and Sabbath school are to meet those of the Rev. Messrs. Abbot and Lawrence, of ——, to-morrow, on an island in the Merrimac, four miles from this place. By arrangement with the superintendent, such of the operatives as can be spared may unite with us; and a happy day it will be for them.

"I regret that Mrs. Lawton is not here to join us. She has been at Haverhill two weeks, with a distant relative. She writes me that her health and spirits are somewhat improved by the change; but that she does not anticipate permanent benefit.

"I will defer closing this already lengthy letter until after our sail.

"'Tis late; but the excitement of the day shuts out the possibility of sleep.

"Would that you were with me now, my dear Jane. I long to tell you all my happiness. I no longer feel alone in the world. There is an arm on which I may hereafter lean for guidance and protection; one noble heart that is *all* my own.

"Mr. Graham and I took the charge of our respective classes during the sail, and the exercises on the island. These over, the company dispersed to ramble at pleasure about the grounds. Herbert led me to the pleasantest part of the island, where the trees had interlaced their branches, and formed a canopy impervious to the sun's rays. While walking here, I know not how, he avowed his deep love for me, and I acknowledged my deep return. From that moment, the painful reserve which I had, for some time, felt in his presence, was gone; and I looked up to him as my dearest earthly friend, my protector and my all. Yet, I love not you, my sweet friend, your reverend father, my uncle's family, Mrs. Lawton, and others, 'less, that I love Herbert more.' I cannot make you understand me. I do not understand myself.

"I hope that this new treasure may not turn my heart from 'the Giver of every good and every perfect gift.' Most deeply do I realize that every blessing He bestows, must be valueless to me, unless He 'sanctifies the gift.' May He keep us from sorrow and temptation."

CHAPTER VI.

"MY beloved Jane—all is over; and my poor friend has gone to the rest of the grave.

"Those who have stood by many death-beds, say that they never witnessed such a triumphant departure. That peculiar expression of her countenance, which I have already attempted to describe to you, lost all its sadness, and became one of seraphic peace and loveliness. She seemed already to have caught raptures like those of the redeemed in Heaven. They sparkled with an unearthly brilliancy in her uplifted eye; and they thrilled in every tone of her voice, as she lay there and repeated—'To die is to go home—*home!* Sorrow and sighing shall flee away; and *death* shall be no more. Thanks, thanks be to God!' Oh! I cannot describe my emotions! I felt as if I were, indeed, 'listening to the melting songs of other worlds.'

"She loved us all to the last moment. She regarded us with just that pitying tenderness, which a superior being might be supposed to feel for loved ones, who are doomed to struggle on with the ills of life. For herself, she had no fears—no misgivings; and she died, at last,

'Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.'

"She returned to A. immediately after the date of my last, in an apparently improved state of health. She was seized with a fit of coughing, attended with hemorrhage, the night after her return; and from that time her decline was fearfully rapid.

"I never saw, in any situation, so much of self-sacrificing kindness, as in Mrs. Lawton's hostess—Mrs. Houston—and her boarders. It was considered a great thing, the little I did at L. for the sick and poor. But it was nothing, comparatively. I had few fatigues at home; and might well incur them occasionally in my attentions to the sick. We had a full pantry and a full purse; I might well take trifles from them, to feed and clothe the poor. Not so with Mrs Houston and her boarders.

"Mrs. Houston is a widow lady, entirely dependent upon her own [illegible] the other ten; for whose education she is extremely anxious She keeps them at school almost constantly. Her income does not allow her to keep help; but, with the assistance her little girls render when out of school, she takes good care of twenty boarders.

"During Mrs. Lawton's illness, she retained the constant services of both daughters. One of them watched by her bed-side, the other assisted Mrs. Houston, that she might have more time to devote to her. Her cares were like those of a mother. Forgetful of her own fatigues and pecuniary interests, she sought, by every means that the most benevolent tenderness could suggest, to soothe the last hours of the sufferer. In this she was aided by her boarders. They are all factory girls, subject to the confinement and fatigues of factory life; yet, with the assistance of Mrs. Houston and her daughters, they took perfect care of Mrs. Lawton. I have called often, and at all hours in the day. I always found her carefully watched; and everything about her dress, bed, medicines, and whole room, in as perfect order as if she had been attended by one of the most accomplished nurses.

"'I feel so grateful to them all!' said she to me one day, her eyes filling with tears. 'And I pity them so, too! Ann sat up with me last night. I had a restless night; and she was over me constantly, adjusting my pillows, bathing my cold limbs and moistening my throat. And, now, she must work hard all day without a moment's sleep.'

"Her physician was present, and inquired how the girls managed to do so much for her, when they had so little time. She informed him that three or four of them came to her room immediately after breakfasting. While one made her bed, another bathed and dressed her, another put her room in order, and another prepared her refreshment. Every day, almost, some one of them came out, and spent a few minutes, perhaps a few hours with her, the overseers kindly allowing spare hands to attend to their work.

"'They can never know how much I thank them,' continued she. 'But, oh! if the prayers I breathe for them, while they are about me, are answered'— She paused, entirely overcome by the grateful emotions that filled her heart.

"I asked Dr. Holt if this kindness was a *general* feature in the character of factory boarding houses.

"'Judging from my own observations in this place and in Lowell, I may say, *Yes*. But I have witnessed exceptions—a few most horrible ones, in Lowell. One day a dirty, ragged little urchin came into my office.

"'Susan Greely is sick,' said he, 'and she wants a doctor.'

"'He was about darting from the office.

"'Stop, my little sir,' said I. 'Who is Susan Greely? and where shall I find her?'

"'Oh! she is nothing but a factory girl that boards to our house. I'll show you where she is. I was out in the yard to play, this morning; and she put up her window, and asked me to go up into her room. She looked just like the ghost I heard mother read about in a novel, when we lived in great style in Boston; but I went up, and she cried, and asked me to go and find a doctor. Mother don't allow me to be the factory girls' waiter, as she calls it; for she says my father was a great gentleman, and she wants me to be a great gentleman, by-and-by, and make a lady of her, just as she used to be.'

"'Who was your father?' I asked.

"'The little fellow drew himself up. 'He was Hon. Horace Kendall, Esquire, of Boston, sir. He had a bank, and a store, mother says; and lots and lots of money. But he got cheated, and lost it all, and then died himself. We lived in Boston just as long as we could, till mother had sold almost everything; then we came up here to get rich again, and then go back to Boston and live in style again.'

"'The little fellow led me immediately to Miss Greely's room The entries and stairs over which we passed, were in perfect keeping with master Kendall's appearance. Cloaks, shawls, handkerchiefs, and old bonnets, were scattered all about—on nails in the entries, on the balustrade, and on the stairs. The dirt that had been swept from the boarders' rooms into the passage, lay, a part of it in heaps, and the rest scattered about the floor.

"'Miss Greely's room presented a most pitiful aspect. It contained three low, miserable looking beds, in such close contact as to leave scarcely room to pass between them. There was not a chair in the room; but the girls' trunks were their substitutes. The apartment was a mere garret in itself—on the third floor, insufficiently lighted and ventilated. Articles of clothing were lying about in utter confusion—on beds, lines, trunks, bandboxes, and the floor. And the latter looked as if it had not been washed for months.

"'One's very heart aches at tales of suffering like Miss Greely's. She was only sixteen—a lovely girl; and her mother was a widow, poor and sickly. She entered the mill one month previous, in her support. She had been failing more than two weeks, but she had not funds to carry her home; besides, she was hoping all along, that she would be enabled to work again. Mrs. Kendall paid her no attention whatever. And when one of Miss Greely's room-mates described her poor appetite, and asked for something nice for her to eat, she pertly answered, that what was good enough for her—was good enough for a factory girl.

"'The girls pitied her, but they were mostly very young; and, having no adviser, they did not know what to do for her So they did the worst thing they could do—purchased lemons, oranges, figs, nuts, and rich cakes for her.

"'Of course, she became worse; and for three days before I was called, she had left her bed only to have it arranged, after the girls

left work at night, until she crawled to the window that morning, to call Master Kendall. A violent cold seized her in the act, the symptoms of which had began to show themselves, when I called.

"'I saw at a glance, that I had come too late; and when, in a voice scarcely audible, from emotion and physical suffering, she gave the circumstances I have just related—in answer to my questions—I felt a pity for her, her poor mother, regrets that I could not save her, and indignation toward her unfeeling hostess, which almost unmanned me.

"'I repaired immediately to Mrs. Kendall; in no gentle terms, told her Miss Greely's condition, and reproved her criminal neglect. She put on airs, which she meant should be very fine; and began excusing herself, by telling me how she had always been accustomed to being waited upon, instead of waiting upon others. She had always been told that factory girls had no feelings; that they did not expect any attentions, or, at least, such as others had.

"'I impatiently interrupted her, by ordering a better room, and a cleaner bed for my patient. I then went to the superintendent. He was a very benevolent man; and felt a truly paternal interest for the comfort and improvement of his operatives. He went to the mills, found a tender and skilful nurse for the poor girl; and then followed me to Mrs. Kendall's.

"'He was much shocked when he saw Miss Greely. I had been telling her what he was doing for her; and when he entered her room, she extended her hand to him and burst into tears. She was still more affected, when her nurse bent over her, and arranged her pillows. She shook with emotion; and the good Mr. Blake turned away, to conceal the tears that ran down his cheeks.

"'We did all that skill and benevolence could do to save her, but in vain. In three days, Mr. Blake, Mrs. Kendall, her nurse, and myself, followed the hearse which bore her to her heart-stricken mother.

"'Never, never did I see such a house as that was! My heart sickens even now, when I think of that poor mother. Mrs. Kendall suffered, as I did not suppose one so worldly and selfish, as she had been, could suffer. Alas! it was by a bitter lesson she learned that factory girls have feelings; and that responsibilities, most weighty and fearful, devolve upon the keepers of factory boarding houses.'

"Oh, my dear Jane, are there not dark, *dark* shadows in the picture of factory life?

"This tale will wring your heart as it did mine. But you will not regret that you have heard it. It is good for us to know the condition—moral, physical, and intellectual—of this portion of our sex. It is good for us to know something of their worth, their noble struggles with adverse circumstances, their temptations, and their sufferings. We may not be enabled to relieve the latter; but Charity has a larger heart, when she weeps for others' woes; and she finds herself looking about her for some burden that she may assist in bearing, for some sorrow that she may alleviate, by her sympathy and love.

"'Tis past six. I must close this letter, and prepare myself for a long walk, in less than a half hour; else I might finish my day in telling you some 'most pretty things,' about Herbert and myself.

"I shall write once more from this place. This will startle you, my Jane; but it is even so. I shall leave town for L, dear L, the Lake, and White Hills, on the first of next month, as the bride of Herbert Graham. Oh, Jane!, this seems all like a dream to me.

"We shall be accompanied by uncle's family, Dr. Horne's, and their visiters. And it is no sybilline wisdom which bids me hope that we shall be joined by my beloved, and faithful friend, Jane.

"It is not certain where we shall reside. Herbert will purchase a farm. Herbert is *vibrating* now, between two; one in this town, and one—I do not know where.

"My little Margaret is sitting on an ottoman, by my side. Her back is turned; for she is making something pretty for me, which she does not wish me to see, until it is completed. It is doubtless a boquet. She exhibits great taste in selecting and arranging flowers. Her grief for her mother's loss, was excessive at first; but she is too light-hearted, she loves me and her new home too well, to grieve long. Poor creature! I pray Heaven that I may be assisted in the discharge of my duties to her, and to others, by an almighty arm.

"'We are waiting for you, dear coz,' says my lively little Grace.

"Farewell, for a little season, my dear Jane.

"HELEN GOULD."

CHAPTER VII.

The east parish of L., like almost every other country village, had its gossip. Miss Hunt was not mischievously disposed; but she was one of that class described by D'Israeli, in the annexed quotation:

"Those unhappy beings who wander from house to house, privileged by the charter of society, to abstract the knowledge they cannot impart, to tire because they are tired, or to seek amusement at the cost of others, belong to that class of society which have affixed no other value to time than that of getting rid of it; these are judges not the best qualified to comprehend the nature and evil of their depredations in the silent apartments of the studious."

She went through the village at every occurrence out of the ordinary routine. She was usually correct in her developments of events, such as courtships, and marriages, *prepense* or *perpetrated*. True, she sometimes incurred the imputation of 'stretching the truth;' but it came wholly by her habit of interposing conjectures of her own, to fill the *vacuums* left by her ignorance of some of the facts of the case. And she was, at the same time, definite and sententious in her descriptions. So our tale may be finished more briefly than in any other way, perhaps, by reporting her in two of her rounds, one taken two or three weeks previously to Helen's marriage, and the other on the subsequent day.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Morey; good afternoon, Ann. Have you heard the news?" said she, as she 'just dropped in' to Mr. Morey's.

Mrs. Morey answered in the negative.

"Well, you will be astonished. You knew that Helen Gould was going to be married next month. Well, Ann Clement is going to be married to Mr. Thomas Gould at the same time. Would you have thought it? It will be a fine ——"

"Can it be possible?" interrogated Mrs. Morey. "How came it to be so secret so long?"

"Yes; it is vastly possible, I assure you. I have it on the authority of a correspondent in Mr. Gould's neighborhood. He did not intend being married so soon; but you know Mr. Lawrence, of the east parish, has had an appointment to the West. Well, as true as you live, Mr. Gould is to succeed him; so Jane will be nicely fixed near home."

"Oh, I am ——" said Ann.

"And still more, and still better," interrupted Miss Hunt. "Mr. Graham, Helen's husband, that is to be, has bought the Gould estate. I declare! I can hardly credit my senses."

Ann jumped up, and clapped her hands in real delight. Mrs. Morey was equally pleased.

"How pleasant it will ——" she began.

"They are coming up to Mr. Clements," said Miss Hunt. "The Goulds, and some friends of theirs, who are making the tour of the United States, Dr. Horne's family, consisting at this time of visiters from somewhere, I have forgotten where; well, they are all coming; and I'll tell you just what I guess. I guess they will come up here on Saturday; be married by Dr. Horne, in the meeting house, on Sunday; and Monday, Mr. Clement and his wife will start with them for the North. They are going by way of the lake, and the White Mountains, to Saratoga and Niagara. What glorious times they will have! and it will be pleasant for us all."

"Now, mother, I must have my new dress," said Ann, "for you know ——"

"But, positively, I must go. Folks don't know anything about this. How glad Mrs. Smith will be! She has always said, that all would come out well to Helen at last, she was so kind to the widow and the fatherless. But, really—good afternoon, Mrs. Morey—good afternoon, Miss Ann. You must call."

"Always at home, and always busy with your work, reading, or flowers," said Miss Hunt, as she and Ann Morey stopped at the yard where Caroline French was training her woodbine.

"I don't see how you can be contented. And I should think you would forget everything that is passing in the world."

"Oh, I read eight newspapers every week," said Caroline, smiling.

"Eight newspapers!"

"Yes; father takes one daily, and two weekly, papers."

"Well, I don't see, for my part, how you find time to read them all. By the way, which bride do *you* prefer?"

"Oh, are they not both beautiful, Caroline? and they are so good, too!" said Ann.

"Yes; I think they are equally beautiful; and yet, strikingly contrasted."

"I heard Mr. Smith say, as he stood looking at them, last evening—and you know he pretends great connoisseurship in such things—well, he said, 'Mrs. Graham has most of the princess in her style.'"

"He was correct in this. There is a peculiarly energetic expression in her full eye, her lofty and broad forehead, and in that slight compression of her lips, much of which she has gained in her season of trial. Still, this does not interfere with the strictest feminine softness. She looks as if *made* for a lofty sphere. There is a graceful dignity in everything she does; and when I looked at her last evening, as she stood leaning on the arm of her husband, with her eyes fixed on his fine face, as he talked with father, I thought her unequalled in everything. But a glance at the sweet little Jane, left me again wholly undecided as to a preference."

"Yes; Mr. Smith said, 'Jane is a lovely girl; sweet as a rose, pure as innocence itself.' I always laugh at his extravagances."

"She is all simplicity," said Caroline, "and as humble as if she were not the loved of all hearts, and 'the observed of all observers.' And this fits her for the station she is to fill."

"Yes," said Ann. "They were dressed just right. Helen ought to wear a rich white satin, and a band of pearls on her plaited hair; and Jane ought to wear a simple white muslin, with a wreath of flowers among her curls, and a rose on her bosom. What a little beauty Margaret is! I don't wonder that they love her so."

"Some thought Mr. Henry Gould's lady very handsome," said Miss Hunt. "What witches they are! Take my word for it, they were made for each other; and will be married in less than two years. Some think he will move to this place, and take the charge of the factory down there—but I don't know."

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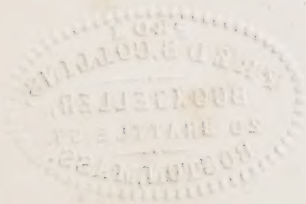
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